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ÉCARTÉ;

OR,

THE SALONS OF PARIS.

"His very faults shall afford amusement, and under them he may, without the formality of a preceptor, communicate instruction."—*Preface to 1st ed. Disowned.*

In a *novel*, not professing to be a mere *tale*, (with which it is often confounded, but from which, I think, it should be carefully distinguished,) the materials for interest are not, I apprehend, to be solely derived from a plot."—*Ibid.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

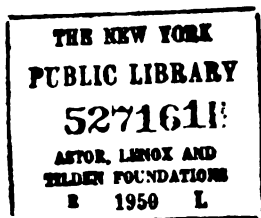
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ÉCARTÉ.

CHAPTER I.

ON the following morning, at an early hour, the handsome cabriolet of the marquis was seen winding through the narrow dirty streets of that quarter of Paris which is not inappropriately called the "*Marais*," and which may be considered as bearing a striking similitude, as well from its appearance, as from the manners and isolated habits of its occupants, to the "Little Britain," of London, so humorously described by Washington Irving in his Sketch Book. Seldom was the curiosity of the good people of the *Marais* gratified by the appearance of any thing higher in the scale of vehicles than a *fiacre*, if we may except one or two old rumbling family carriages, that had been handed down from father to son for several successive generations, and which regularly once a year furnished and beautified for a Long-Champs procession in the season, were drawn by two long-tailed, snail-paced animals, of years nearly coeval with the ponderous machine itself.

The rapid movements of the cabriolet drew all heads to the doors and windows; and when they beheld the gay livery of the *jockai*, differing from that of the antiquated domestics whom they were wont to see planted behind the family carriages on the before-mentioned occasions, as much as the fashions of the days of Charles the Tenth differ from those of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, and when they moreover remarked the air

of contempt with which that *jockai* looked down upon them all, as if he felt ashamed of being seen in so plebeian a quarter of the town, they marvelled among themselves who the stranger possibly could be. Some boldly affirmed to their neighbours across the street, that it was the Dauphin ; others stoutly denied the fact, declaring, with an air of profound seriousness, that the nose was not sufficiently long. This they said they knew, because they had witnessed a review in the Champ de Mars, at which he had commanded, only a few days before, and though they had not been able to approach near enough to distinguish any other feature, the nose was as distinctly visible as if it had been seen through a telescope. The assertion was moreover confirmed by a fat old *marchande d'huîtres*, who supplied her *quartier* with shell-fish and news, and was considered in some degree the oracle of the neighbourhood. Now as it was evident that the nose of the stranger did not protrude more than six inches beyond his face, it was beyond dispute that this could not be the Dauphin, and conjecture fell in turn on the very few great people with whose names they were familiar. In vain, however, did they exercise their ingenuity. All were anxious to appear to know something on the subject ; but the denial of one invariably overturned the assertion of another : and they were finally compelled to return to their several avocations without coming to any positive conclusion on the subject. There was one street, however, where the inhabitants were more accustomed to these visits, and where, if they were not intimately acquainted with the persons of the visitors, they at least were more familiar with the object which drew them there ; and this street, the dirtiest in all Paris, communicated with a narrow *cul-de-sac*, even dirtier than itself.

At the bottom of this *cul-de-sac*, and forming its base, stood a lofty building, seven stories in height—if a building could well be said to stand, to which time, and storms, and partial dilapidation, had given an inclination of several degrees, almost threatening the rash be-

ing who had the courage to approach it with instant destruction. The first *étage* was of course the most splendid in appearance, as it boasted a set of tawdry, rusty window-curtains, that had evidently arrived at the last stage of repair. In no one of the succeeding stories was this luxury to be seen; and, in fact, such was the gloom of the *cul-de-sac* itself, that this proved to be rather an advantage, inasmuch as it enabled the occupants to enjoy a little of the light from Heaven, of which they must otherwise have been deprived.

Let it not be supposed, however, that the eye encountered nothing but naked windows, in its gradual ascent from the *rez-de-chaussée* to the *grenier* or *septième étage*, which was almost buried in the clouds. In most of these were to be seen, various articles of grosser wearing apparel, which, having been submitted to the wash-tub, were now, dripping with wet, hung out to dry—not in the sun, for sun never yet shone on the spot, but in the air. Numerous cords were, moreover, fastened in angular directions across the front of the rooms, and over these were carelessly flung stockings, caps, and other light and less bulky articles of female apparel. Wherever a portion of the walls, broken and defaced by time, was left exposed, the eye encountered innumerable long yellow streaks, the effects of ancient drippings from the clothes-encumbered casements; yet, strange to say, in almost every window bloomed autumnal flowers, tastefully arranged in vases, and half redeeming, in their loveliness, the habitual and desolating filth amid which they were doomed to flourish—watered daily, not with the dews of Heaven, but with soap-suds and other domestic fluids.

De Forsac alighted from his cabriolet at the entrance of the *cul-de-sac*, and, with a feeling somewhat allied to shame, paced his way towards the building we have just described; not that he cared one jot for the opinion of the dirty *habitans du quartier*, whom he was not soon likely to behold again: but because he feared an unfavourable impression might be produced on the mind of

his servant, whom he had only recently engaged, and whom it was by no means his policy to initiate into the secret of his visit. The rattling of the vehicle had drawn many of the inmates of the crazy edifice to the windows, but they only stared at him, without manifesting surprise. The marquis was not the only dashing cavalier from the fashionable part of town who was in the habit of penetrating occasionally into that *cul-de-sac*.

It happened at the moment when he gained the *rez-de-chaussée*, that an old woman who was busily engaged in hanging out some articles of heavy apparel, to dry, on a window immediately over the door-way, in her anxiety to lean forward and obtain a glimpse of the stranger, dropped a wet sheet, which, partially spreading as it descended, completely enveloped the person of the marquis in its folds, who, had he not leaned for support against the door-way, must inevitably have been overthrown. The grotesque appearance which he exhibited in this situation, together with the violent efforts which he made to extricate himself—efforts which seemed only to embarrass him the more—naturally drew from those around an unrepressed burst of laughter, which was echoed from every man, woman, and child, in the *cul-de-sac*. The only person really concerned for his situation was the old woman herself, who immediately ran down from the fifth *étage*, to aid in his release, and to apologize for the accident. In fact, assistance had now become necessary, for so completely was De Forsac *entortillé* in the mazes of what might be said to be his winding-sheet, that it was some minutes before the author of the disaster could succeed in liberating him. This, however, was finally accomplished; and, when released, the beldame, with many reverences, besought him to forgive her. Shivering with the damp, and deeply mortified at the figure he exhibited before his servant—of whose ridicule he, like every other Frenchman, stood greatly in dread, since, from his constant proximity to his person, he must be an eternally reminding witness of his humiliation—De Forsac was in

no mood to listen with even common patience to her justification; but, after bestowing on her the expressive epithets of *maudite bête*, *vieille sorcière*, *sacrée canaille*, &c. &c. &c., and wishing her from the bottom of his soul, at the devil, at length gained the entrance of the passage.

After groping his way for a short time through this dark avenue, bounded on either side by two narrow gutters, through which waters, not of the most limpid description, rolled their lazy course, he at last reached a staircase, which could only be discovered by dint of feeling. Grasping the bulky and misshapen railing with force, and raising his feet cautiously upon each step, much with the same indecision and nervousness with which one would ascend a staircase blindfold, he at length contrived to gain the *entresol* without any other accident than the overthrow of a black earthen utensil, which lay on the first landing place. Here the darkness was a shade less perplexing, and when he had reached the *premier étage*, there was even light sufficient to distinguish the figures of two females, who stood with their doors ajar, giggling and whispering as he ascended; the tones of their voices alone denoted them to be young, for more than the outline it would have required the eyes of a Hans of Iceland to distinguish: and when he had mounted sufficiently high on the third flight of stairs, for them to make good their retreat in the event of a retrograde movement on his part, they advanced to the foot, and inquired, in an under tone, and with mock compassion, how Monsieur felt after his ducking.

De Forsac bit his lip with rage, and cursed both the *Marais*, and the *vieux coquin* of whom he was in search, for inhabiting such a place. On gaining the landing place of the second floor, however, he felt less puzzled in his movements, the light enabling him to discover the direction he should pursue; yet this also proved a source of annoyance to him, for, at every door of every apartment—and there were several on each landing place, all occupied by separate families—groups of

heads were protruded, and innumerable tongues kept up a low bussing, which he well knew originated in the curiosity identified with his recent accident. As fast as he reached one floor, the occupants of that below issued from their holds like so many rabbits from their warrens, and trusting their voices to a higher key, conferred among themselves, and indulged in their several witticisms on the occasion. Finally, the marquis, after ascending four more flights of stairs, the uppermost of which was as rough as a butcher's block, and certainly not half so clean, and after submitting himself to the ordeal of encountering the same greeting on each floor, succeeded in gaining the seventh heaven, or, what is nearly as high in some of the old buildings in Paris, the seventh story, or *grenier*, of this enormous structure.

Here, however, he was once more at a loss. There were no less than six doors leading to six apartments, which, judging from their proximity to each other, could not exceed ten feet in length, by as many in breadth. To determine in his choice was almost impracticable, for he fancied that they all bore the same confounding marks of poverty and wretchedness. Three of the number, and these, if a choice could be made, were rather superior to the others, bore cards in lieu of plates, and De Forsac approached to examine them. On the first he saw, "M. Charles Courtols, *poète et écrivain public*." The marquis had nothing to do with poets. He approached the second, and read, "Monsieur Précourt, *ancien militaire*." This was evidently not what he sought, and he hastened to the last of the three *distingués* of the *grenier*, and with some difficulty deciphered, "Mademoiselle Pauline, *figurante à l'Ambigu Comique*." The idea of a *figurante* was enough to set the brain of De Forsac at work. "Is she young?—is she pretty?—is she at home?" were all the thoughts of an instant, and he resolved to ascertain the fact. Just, however, as he was about to knock, it occurred to him that from the proximity of Monsieur Précourt, an-

cien militaire, to Mademoiselle Pauline, *figurante*, it was not very unnatural to infer, that they were not utter strangers to each other; and that, in that case, as well as in the event of his being there at the moment, it might not be altogether prudent to venture into her presence without some plausible pretext.

In the next instant he was supplied with one, and tapping gently at the door, a female voice invited him to enter. The marquis opened the door of a room, measuring, as he had anticipated about ten feet square, in which lay scattered, in various directions, all the wretched paraphernalia of a woman of the last rank upon the stage. His glance at the interior was, however, but cursory, his attention being more particularly drawn to the lady, who, as he had justly conjectured, was accompanied by Monsieur Précourt, the *ancien militaire*, who, in the faded uniform of a common soldier, and a tattered foraging cap or *bonnet de police*, sat with his arms encircling the form of Mademoiselle Pauline, which was of true Amazonian proportions, and only partially covered with a soiled cotton *robe de chambre*—her hair *en papillottes*, and her naked feet *en pantoufles*. Startled at this unexpected sight, De Forsac drew back involuntarily, too much discomposed, by the disappointment he felt at seeing what he thought a monster of a woman, instead of the delicate, young, and voluptuous creature he had anticipated, to say a word.

“*Ah ça l’ami,*” said the soldier, fiercely erecting his tall frame, and touching the ceiling with his head, while, as usual, he stroked his moustache in token of hostility—“*Que désirez-vous ici ?*”—and he advanced a pace or two towards him.

Fortunately for De Forsac, he recollected the man, who had formerly served in the same regiment with him. This, however, was long before he had obtained his marquisate.

“*Quoi, gaman, est-ce toi ? ne te rappelle-tu pas de*

ton officier, Monsieur le Capitaine de Forsac, du quatrième à cheval ?

In an instant the *bonnet* fell from the soldier's head, and the fierceness of his look was succeeded by the mildness and gentleness of a lamb. His hands were dropped at his side, and he stood in the attitude of respect and obedience.

"*Je demande excuse, mon officier,*" he replied ; "*je ne vous ai pas remis, mais voyez-vous, je n'y vois plus clair—je commence à vieillir, mon officier—moi, qui a passé ma jeunesse au service.*"

"*Et que fais-tu maintenant, Précourt ?—as-tu demi-solde ?*"

"*Pas un sous, mon officier ! Ah, voyez-vous, ce n'était pas ainsi dans le temps de l'Empereur.*"

"*Comment fais-tu donc pour vivre ?*"

"*Bien peu de chose, mon officier ; mais voyez-vous,*" pointing to a set of foils which hung up in a corner of the room, "*j'enseigne un peu à faire les armes aux jeunes gens du quartier.*"

"*En ce cas-là il te revient toujours quelque chose.*"

"*Bein peu de chose, mon officier, parce que, voyez-vous, tous les gens de ce quartier sont si misérables ! Mais voici Pauline, mon officier,*" and turning to the *grosse figurante*, who had retired to change her tattered robe de chambre behind the curtains of the bed—" *viens, Pauline,*" he cried, "*viens te montrer à Monsieur le Comte.*" Finding, however, that Pauline did not obey the summons with that military promptitude to which he had been accustomed all his life, he proceeded to drag her very unceremoniously forth from her temporary dressing room, notwithstanding the lady was literally *en chemise*. "*Voyez-vous, mon officier,*" he continued, "*elle a de belles jambes,*" directing his attention to two enormous pillars which he thus designated—" *et avec cela, elle gagne ses dix francs par semaine au théâtre, de sorte que nous avons toujours de quoi acheter du pain et du fromage.*"

"*Il paraît que tu ne te passe pas d'eau-de-vie tou-*

jours," said De Forsac, pointing to a nearly empty *flacon* that lay on the breakfast-table, "*et te voilà déjà à moitié gris.*"

"*Ah, dame ! Voyez-vous, mon officier, c'est l'habitude, et voici Pauline, qui n'en boit pas mal non plus. Voulez-vous que je vous verse à boire, mon capitaine ?*" he pursued, taking up the brandy bottle, and filling two small coffee cups, which were made to supply the absence of glasses.

De Forsac at first declined ; but observing that his old *camarade* seemed half offended, he finally accepted the challenge "*Allons, Précourt, à ta santé, et à celle de ta Pauline.*" He had, however, scarcely tasted it, when he felt his mouth and throat almost on fire with the liquor, and he threw down the cup with a movement of impatience.

"*Quoi, gredin !*" he exclaimed, as soon as he could find breath to articulate, "*est-ce que tu me donne cela pour de l'eau-de-vie ?—c'est de l'eau-forte.*"

"*Je demande excuse, mon officier, c'est de la bonne eau-de-vie, et cela nous coûte toujours vingt sous le litre,*" replied the soldier, putting down his cup, which he had emptied at a draught ; and without moving a muscle of his countenance, "*N'est-ce pas, mamie,*" he inquired, turning to Pauline, "*que cela nous coûte vingt sous le litre ?*"

"*Ah ! dame, oui,*" said the *grosse figurante*, in a voice nearly as powerful as his own. "*C'est moi qui l'achète, et j'en bois toujours.*"

"The devil you do," thought De Forsac ; and as he only wished to satisfy himself that he had not swallowed vitriol instead of brandy, as he had almost feared, his mind was now at rest on this score, and he proposed to take leave of the worthy and well-assorted couple.

"*Ah, ça,*" he demanded, pulling out his purse, and putting a five-franc piece into the hand of Précourt, "*peux-tu m'indiquer l'appartement d'un nommé Pierre Godot, qui doit demeurer sur cet étage ?*"

"*Si je le puis, mon officier,*" replied the *militaire*,

placing his fore-finger significantly on his nose ; "*je crois bien, c'est dans le coin là-bas,*" pointing through the door-way in the direction of the room.

"*Eh bien, va voir s'il est chez lui.*"

The soldier, on whom the *eau-de-vie* was fast taking effect, seemed delighted with the message. He threw on his forage cap, with the fiercest air, stroked out his moustache to a formidable length, and then, with a stern frown on his brow, advanced to the door. He gave one loud rap, and a quick and hurried voice from within, asked who was there ; but Précourt, without answering, drew a small cord passed through the door, and communicating with a wooden latch within, by which it was opened, and his tall and almost ruffian-like figure glided through the opening.

"*Grand Dieu, à l'assassin ! aux voleurs !*" shrieked the same cracked and trembling voice ; but the cries were drowned in the hoarse and boisterous laugh of Précourt, who was evidently enjoying the alarm he had occasioned. Apprehensive that the noise might attract the attention of the several occupants of the other rooms, De Forsac hastily followed, and beheld the following ludicrous scene.

In the centre of the small smoke-discoloured room, stood a large table, on which lay scattered a variety of utensils, that had just been used for breakfast—fragments there were none, for the repast had evidently been of too miserable a nature to admit of any. A book of accounts bound in parchment, and fastened by a brass clasp, an old broken coffee-cup filled with ink, and the stump of what had once been a pen, lay also upon the table ; mingled with these, three or four loose papers, that had every appearance, even at a first glance, of being bills of exchange, were likewise discernible ; but what more immediately attracted the eye, and might be said to give weight to the whole, were four large, well-filled strong canvass bags, carefully arranged on one side of the table. From the size of the circular substance distinguishable through the covering of three of these, they might at once be known to contain five-franc

pieces; and if any doubt could arise in regard to the contents of the fourth, it would at once have been dispelled by comparing them with a quantity of Louis-d'or, some of which were piled at one end of the same table, while others lay loosely scattered near them, evidently with the same destination in view.

Beyond the table, and with his body half bent, in an attitude of intense alarm, stood a gaunt-looking personage, apparently about sixty years of age; his hair and beard, the latter unshaven for the last day or two, were gray. His eyes were also of the same colour, small, sharp, and deep set beneath a pair of long and bushy eyebrows; his neck was bare, thin, and scraggy, and his head was covered with a cotton nightcap, that had once been white. One of his meagre, long, sun-burnt, scaly hands, grasped a bag, of a size similar to that containing the gold on the table; the other held a quantity of *billets de banque* and promissory notes, closely pressed against his breast with convulsive energy; while the whole frame was bent over the money before him, evidently with the view of shielding it from the grasp of an intruder, whose ferocious air and wild costume were well calculated to excite alarm in the mind of the miserable miser. This formidable individual now stood at the opposite side of the table, enjoying the embarrassment of the old man, with a malignant expression of pleasure—an expression which it was obvious the latter attributed to a consciousness of his power, and a determination to follow up his advantage.

In the original we have imperfectly described, De Forsac immediately recognised his old friend, the money lender; and, delighted to see such a supply of cash on the table, he advanced to accost him in a strain of familiarity, which he well knew how to assume, whenever it suited his interest or convenience; but the old miser, alive only to his dread of the object before him, neither heard nor seemed to see him, but remained fixed in the same position, his gray eyes glancing alternately from the money on the table to the powerful and impo-

sing figure of the *militaire*, his knees trembling beneath him, and his mouth half open, disclosing three or four scattered yellow teeth, which were all that now remained to him.

"*Va-t-en, Précourt,*" said the marquis, giving him another five-franc piece, "*ne vois-tu pas que tu fais peur à ce bon vieillard ?*"

"*Je vais, mon officier,*" replied the soldier, touching his cap with one hand and pocketing the money with the other ; then addressing the old man, "*Ah ça, mon vieux, me prêterez-vous vingt sous une autre fois sans me faire payer les intérêts ? Voyez-vous, Monsieur le Comte,*" he added, turning to De Forsac, "*j'avais besoin, il y a quelques jours, de vingt sous pour acheter la bouteille pour Pauline et moi. Eh bien, je viens ici emprunter vingt sous—il me les donne—le lendemain je reviens les lui rendre. Croiriez-vous, mon officier, ce vieux gredin me demande un liard pour l'intérêt—je refuse—il insiste—enfin, je le paie, mais en sortant, je lui jure sur ma moustache qu'il me payera cela assez cher. Je viens maintenant lui faire une peur du diable, et nous voilà quittes. Adieu, mon officier,*" and he strode out of the room.

No sooner had Précourt departed, than the old man, who seemed to have been labouring under a species of fascination during his presence, deposited his bags and papers within a heavy iron chest that stood near the foot of his bed—he then carefully locked it, and depositing the key in his pocket, turned to De Forsac, and inquired whom he had the pleasure of addressing.

"*Es-tu fou donc, Godot ?*" replied the marquis, "*est-ce que ta peur t'a fait perdre la tête ? Je suis ton ancienne connaissance le Marquis De Forsac.*"

The old man took a pair of spectacles from the mantel-piece, rubbed them for a moment with a dirty, chequered cotton handkerchief, placed them carefully across his nose, and advancing a pace or two, examined the features of his visiter with a scrutiny that at any other moment would have amused De Forsac, but which the uncer-

tainty he laboured under, in regard to the final issue of his negotiation, now prevented him from enduring with even common patience.

"*Vieux coquin*," he exclaimed angrily, stamping violently on the floor as he spoke, "*me reconnais-tu enfin pour le Marquis De Forsac ?*"

The elevated tone of his voice, and the vehemence of his action, startled the dotard, who, drawing hastily back, suffered his spectacles to fall on the brick floor, where they were instantly dashed to pieces.

"*Oh, Dieu ! Monsieur le Marquis, mes lunettes, mes lunettes, vous m'avez fait casser mes lunettes.*"

"*Au diable avec tes lunettes*," replied De Forsac, "*je t'en donnerai d'autres.*"

This assurance did not altogether satisfy the old man, who, now that he was sufficiently recovered from his fright to recognise the marquis, recollected that he was ever more ready to promise than to perform. However, as there was no alternative, he was even compelled to accept this as a temporary compensation.

The dying embers over which his *tasse de café* had been boiled, were still visible, and as they emitted at least an apology for warmth, he advanced two wretched rush-bottomed chairs, offering De Forsac the best. His visiter glanced at it with a suspicious eye ; drew forth his pocket handkerchief, spread it carefully over the seat, folded the skirts of his coat around him ; and, to avoid coming in contact with the greasy back of the chair, sat as stiff and as upright as a boarding-school miss in her back-board.

The old man seated himself also, but with less restraint, and evidently without any dread of soiling an old tattered French-gray frock coat nearly as greasy as the chair itself. He then inquired, in a low and eager tone, what De Forsac required of him.

"*Il me faut de l'argent*," said the marquis, abruptly.

"*De l'argent, de l'argent !—mais, mon Dieu, je n'en ai pas moi !*" said the *vieillard*, almost relapsing into

his recent terror, at the unqualified demand thus made upon him.

"Tu mens—tu en as—et de l'or, et des billets de banque, en quantité."

"Mais, mon Dieu, Monsieur le Marquis, vous m'en devez déjà pour dix-mille francs ; je viens toute à l'heure de faire votre compte. Le voici," he continued, taking up the account-book already described ; but as he was about to unclose it, De Forsac snatched it out of his hand, and threw it with a whirling motion upon the bed.

"Au diable avec tes comptes," he replied. The old man looked round to see that it was safe, then resumed his position. "Je sais que je t'en dois," continued De Forsac, "mais pour cette fois ce n'est pas pour moi. C'est pour un jeune Anglais, riche, honorable, et l'héritier d'un titre."

The money-lender raised his ears like those of a horse when he hears the huntsman's horn, and his attention was now completely alive to the subject.

"Quelle somme lui faut-il ?" he inquired. "Vingt mille francs," said the marquis. "C'est une assez grosse somme, mais quel intérêt payera-t-il, parce que voyez-vous il y a bien peu d'argent dans le marché."

"Tiens," said the Marquis, drawing his chair closer to that of the money-lender, "en voici le secret." He then proceeded to say, that a young English friend of his was willing to give fifty per cent. discount on bills to the amount required at six months ; that his means of liquidation were undeniable—a fact that might easily be ascertained at his banker's, Lafitte ; and finally proposed that the ten thousand francs, the amount of discount, should be divided between them.

To this the old man decidedly objected. The security, he had no doubt, was good, for he had found that of most Englishmen to be so ; but he did not think five-and-twenty per cent. a sufficient remuneration. He was extremely sorry, but he must decline it. "It was indeed too little."

"Very well," said De Forsac, "I know two or three other men who will be glad to take fifteen per cent. I

wished, however, to have given you the preference of an old friend, and indeed," he added, in one of his bland hypocritical tones, "as much out of consideration for the sum I owe you as any thing else."

"*Un instant,*" said the money-lender, seeing that he was about to retire. "*Eh! mon Dieu, Monsieur le Marquis, que vous êtes exigeant. Vingt-cinq pour cent. —c'est bien peu de chose pour moi, qui en courrai tout le risque—prenez en vingt, et donnez-moi le reste.*"

"*Il n'y a point de risque je te dis,*" said the marquis carelessly, for he now saw that the money lender was ready to enter into his terms, although he naturally felt desirous of making the best bargain for himself. "*Tu n'auras l'affaire que sur la condition suivante—nous partagerons les cinquante pour cent.*"

"*Eh bien, Monsieur le Marquis, sur ce qu'il vous reviendra, vous me payerez au moins mille francs, de votre compte.*"

"*Pas un sou, Pierre Godot,*" said De Forsac, gravely, and emphatically. "*Je ne suis pas encore marié.*"

"*Eh bien, cinq cent francs donc; c'est bien peu de chose sur vos dix mille.*"

"*Pas un sou, Pierre Godot,*" reiterated his obstinate debtor; "*tu me payeras les cinq mille francs, ou tu n'auras rien sur cette affaire. Ainsi décide-toi.*"

"*Oh mon Dieu, mon Dieu,*" said the old man, impatiently, "*on voit bien que vous êtes toujours mauvais sujet, Monsieur le Marquis, mais lui faut-il de l'argent aujourd'hui?*"

"*Il lui en faut tout de suite,*" replied De Forsac; "*dans ce moment même il nous attend chez lui; ainsi, mon vieux, dépêche-toi: commence d'abord par dégarnir ton coffre fort.*"

"*Mais les renseignemens, Monsieur le Marquis, il faut d'abord que j'aille chez son banquier.*"

"*Je t'emmènerai dans mon cabriolet; tu descendras en route, et si tu trouves bons les renseignemens qu'on te donnera chez Lafitte, tu déposeras entre mes mains les*

cinq mille francs, en bons billets de banque—ensuite je te conduirai chez l'Anglais."

The old man sighed—" *Vous êtes bien méfiant, Monsieur le Marquis,*" he muttered; then throwing off his dirty nightcap, he passed the few teeth which time, and use, and accident, had left in a comb that lay on the mantle-piece, through his scanty gray hairs, and tying a handkerchief, that had once been white, round his long neck, completed what he called his customary toilet. The next object of his attention was the account book, which De Forsac had so unceremoniously flung from him. This obtained, he once more applied the key to the chest, which contained his treasure, in which he carefully deposited the ledger; then removing a large portfolio, filled with *billets de banque* of various amounts, he carefully counted the sum of twenty thousand francs, which he enclosed in a piece of brown paper, and placed on one side. Turning then to the marquis, he asked whether he would prefer having his money in notes, or in gold, at the same time holding up one of the bags before described.

" *Ma foi, l'or vaut bien le papier,*" said De Forsac. " *Quelle est la somme, mon vieux ?*"

" *Le sac contient deux cents cinquante Louis,*" replied the money-lender.

" *Bon; nous le mettrons dans le cabriolet; aussi tu ne fais pas bien de garder tant d'argent chez toi, on pourroit te le voler."*

" *Le croyez vous, Monsieur le Marquis ?*" said the dotard, trembling in every limb at the thought, and dropping the sack of gold on the floor, in his trepidation—" *en ce cas-là je ne dois pas sortir—je ne sortirai pas—ce militaire farouche."*

The marquis secretly cursed himself for the mischief he had involuntarily occasioned, and sought at once to repair the evil.

" *Comment, vieux gredin, oses-tu soupçonner ce brave militaire ? C'est un de mes anciens compagnons d'armes; un homme qui te méprise, et ton or aussi—il a voulu te faire peur, et voilà tout—veux-tu que je lui*

fasse part de tes vils soupçons ?" and he moved towards the door.

"*Oh non, Monsieur le Marquis,*" interrupted the old man, in whom the fear of losing his five-and-twenty per cent., added to the dread he entertained of the savage-looking Précourt, began to subdue every lesser apprehension. "*Je ne le soupçonne point, ce brave homme, puisque vous le dites brave—mais, voyez-vous, il n'y a pas longtemps que je suis ici—et je ne connais personne dans tout la maison.*"

"*Pourquoi es-tu donc venu habiter ce vilain quartier ?*"

"*Parceque le logement est si cher, depuis que les Anglais sont à Paris. J'ai payé mon dernier, au Faubourg St. Jermain, quinze francs par mois, tandis qu'ici je ne paye que sept, et lorsqu'on a besoin de l'argent on sait toujours où me trouver.*"

"*Sacré avare,*" murmured De Forsac to himself.

"*Eh bien, es-tu prêt ?*"

"*Tout à l'heure, Monsieur le Marquis.*"

The notes for twenty thousand francs, wrapped up as we have described them, were then committed to the custody of his pocket book, as well as several blank *papiers timbrés* for various amounts, and the box having been carefully fastened with a patent lock on one side, and a hasp and padlock on the other, the only difficulty now remaining was in regard to the *sac* of gold. The old man was unwilling that it should be carried down in an exposed manner, as the sight of so much money would, he said, excite suspicion of his wealth in the house, and render him liable to be robbed in his absence. What was to be done ? It was evidently too bulky to enter a pocket, and even if it were not, it was decidedly so weighty as to threaten its being torn to atoms. In this dilemma De Forsac devised an expedient. It chanced that the hat, which had been substituted for Monsieur Godot's more comfortable *bonnet de nuit*, was not unlike one of our modern fashionable opera hats, inasmuch as it possessed that wonderful elas-

ticity and aptness to receive all manner of shapes and impressions which are so remarkable and convenient in these; but here, in common justice to our long-tried and well-approved friend Jupp be it said, all sort of resemblance ceased. The beaver, for there was every reason to believe that it had once been adorned with that material, since a little was still visible beneath the faded band, had, after struggling for years, been compelled to relinquish its last hold on the felt—and no doubt the felt felt the absence of the beaver—for it was now as furrowed, and wrinkled, and faded, and nut-brown, as any antiquated damsel of fifty, who pines in vain for the downy bloom which once lingered in glossy fulness on her more youthful cheek.

With this great property of elasticity, however, in which the damsel is certainly sunk in the comparison, it was evident to De Forsac that Monsieur Godot's hat might be rendered serviceable, and converted into a sort of extra pocket; accordingly, he advised that he should carry the *sac* in his hat, in which case its contents could not possibly be known, even if remarked. This hint was immediately acted upon by the anxious money-lender, who, removing it from the floor on which it had fallen, consigned the gold to the crown of his hat, which was consequently raised some four or five inches in a conical form above its wonted position. At first, he winced, and declared the weight to be almost insupportable; but De Forsac having observed that he would only have to descend with it to the *cul-de-sac*, where his cabriolet was in waiting, he at length summoned courage to retain it. They now issued from the unhealthy apartment, to the landing place, when the old man carefully double-locked the door, and consigned the key to his pocket. At this moment, the loud laugh of the formidable soldier was heard in Made-moiselle Pauline's room, and Godot turned his eye upon De Forsac with a ludicrous expression of fear while his lips murmured, "Do you think every thing will be safe within?"

"Did I not tell you that I know the man?" said De Forsac, impatiently. "Here," he added, in the next moment, and taking another five-franc piece from his purse, "knock at the door, and give him this as from yourself; say that it is intended as a sort of compensation for the charge of interest, and that you hope every thing will be forgotten."

Delighted at the opportunity thus presented for purchasing a truce with one whom he so much wished to conciliate, without any sacrifice on his own part, the miser seized the money with avidity, and advanced towards the door, his small gray eyes twinkling with vivacious cunning, and his step denoting the removal of some strong anxiety from his mind. He knocked at the door, but the rough "*ouvrez*" which greeted his ears, set his frame once more in a tremor, and he could not find courage to obey the summons. Another, "*Eh bien, ouvrez donc, sacré bleu!*" uttered in a tone of impatience, decided him. He would willingly have retreated to the antipodes if he could; but retreat was now impossible, and, with an uncertain hand, he raised the latch, and pushed the door open before him. So great was his alarm for a moment, that his eyes swam with dizziness, and he only beheld through a film the indistinct outline of the objects within. The *militaire* sprang from his seat, stroked his moustache, looked fiercely as a bravo, and advanced to the door way, exclaiming "*Eh bien, mon vieux coquin: est-ce vous?—que désirez-vous ici? Etes-vous venu me demander encore des intérêts?*"

"*Oh non, Monsieur le militaire,*" replied the old man, with difficulty moving his jaws, which were half paralyzed with fright. "*Je suis bien fâché de ce que j'ai fait, et je vous prie, Monsieur, de me faire le plaisir d'accepter cette petite somme pour compensation.*"

Précourt took the proffered money, looked at it a moment, and then, with an air of hesitation, demanded, whether he intended this as a loan, on which he was again to be charged interest?

"*Mais non,*" said the money-lender eagerly, and somewhat re-assured by the absence of all hostility in the tone in which the question was asked; "*je vous en fais cadeau.*"

"*A la bonne heure,*" rejoined the soldier: "*voilà une autre affaire—c'est fait cela en bon camarade, et, parbleu je crois que vous êtes bon enfant au fond.*"

This assurance could not fail to prove highly satisfactory to Pierre Godot, who chuckled amazingly at the conciliating language used by his formidable neighbour; but it unfortunately happened that Précourt, when *un peu gris*, had a habit of what is vulgarly called suiting the action to the word, and a friendly tap generally accompanied a friendly expression. His open and uplifted hand now fell with a no very gentle pressure on the head of the old man, who sank beneath the touch, upon the landing place, with as little power of resistance as a bag of loose bones, and without at first being able to utter a syllable, while sparks of fire flew from his eyes, and his features were distorted with pain.

"*Grand Dieu! qu'ai-je fait?*" exclaimed Précourt, in whom the situation of the money-lender had now excited serious alarm: "*Pauline, ma mie, apporte une tasse d'eau—vite.*"

De Forsac, who meanwhile was waiting a few steps below on the staircase, hearing a noise like that of some falling body, and the subsequent hasty exclamation of Précourt, returned to see what was the matter, and was not a little surprised at beholding the old man stretched upon the *carreau* almost without motion. At this moment, Mademoiselle Pauline appeared with the water, the whole of which she dashed at once into the face of the sufferer. The effect was instantaneous; and the miser eagerly gasping for breath, as one usually does, after an unexpected, and somewhat copious bath of this nature, rose from the spot where he lay, although yet so stunned from the fall as scarcely to be able to keep his legs. Précourt stooped to pick up his hat, which had fallen off, and was not a little astonished when, attracted

by its enormous weight, he beheld, in the bottom of the crown a bag closely filled with coin.

"*Diantre !*" he exclaimed, turning his eyes to the dimensions of two moderate saucers, and yet with a malicious grin lurking about his mouth ; "*je ne suis plus étonné maintenant, mon vieux. Il me semblait que vous aviez la tête diablement petite. Voilà l'affaire expliquée—Quoi ! est-ce que vous n'avez pas le courage de le remettre ?*" he inquired, pointing with the anxiously extended hand of its owner, on whose sharp features lingered an expression of mingled pain and distrust.

The old man looked at the string, to see that all was safe, and then screwing up his face, as if in anticipation of the pain which he felt conscious would result from the operation, once more placed the hat, and its contents, upon his head ; but the soreness produced such excruciating agony, that he was compelled in the next instant to remove it.

"*Que faut-il faire, Monsieur le Marquis,*" he said, in a whining tone ; "*je ne puis plus le porter sur ma tête. Oh ! Monsieur le Militaire, je ne reviendrai jamais de ce coup-là.*"

"*Je suis bien fâché, mon bon vieux,*" replied the soldier, whom Pierre Godot's present, trifling as it was, had somewhat softened in his favour ; "*mais, parbleu, je ne pouvais deviner que vous aviez fait de votre chapeau un porte-feuille. Donnez-moi la main, mon vieux.*"

The conciliatory tone of the soldier acted, more than any thing else could possibly have done, at that moment, as a calmant on the bristles of Pierre Godot ; and, with a ghastly grin, that was intended to express pleasure, confidence, and good will, he submitted to have his bony hand enclosed in the iron grasp of Précourt, who thus testified the sincerity of his feelings.

De Forsac, who had never before stood so greatly in need of the five thousand francs thus strangely deposited in Pierre Godot's hat, felt exceedingly vexed at these several interruptions, and he cursed his own folly in sending the dotard on this mission. The gold he had,

however, set his heart upon, and he was resolved not to be baulked.

"*Tiens, Précourt !*" he exclaimed, "*mets ton vieux manteau, et descends avec ce sac d'or—tu le déposeras dans mon cabriolet.*"

"*Oui, mon officier,*" replied the soldier, hastening to reach his cloak, which was hanging up, covering nearly one side of Mademoiselle Pauline's apartment.

"*Croyez-vous qu'il n'y aurait pas de risque, Monsieur le Marquis ?*" whispered Pierre Godot ; "*c'est une grosse somme,*" and he glanced at the *militaire* with an eye of reviving suspicion.

De Forsac answered only by a look, which gave him to understand, that if he insinuated any thing more, or even hesitated an instant, he would disclose his suspicions to Précourt, and leave him to his fate.

The money-lender sighed, and looked wistfully at the *sac*, as he handed it over to the temporary guardianship of Précourt, who now approached.

"*Parbleu, il ne pèse pas mal,*" observed the soldier, placing one hand, with the money, across his chest, and drawing the folds of his cloak round him with the other, as he followed the marquis down the staircase. "*Je voudrais bien que ce fut à moi. Il paraît, mon ami, que vous en avez beaucoup de ces sacs chez vous.*"

"*Oh, non, Monsieur, le Militaire,*" faltered the money-lender, following close at his heels. "*Les sacs que vous avez vus chez moi ce matin ne contiennent que des grosses pièces de deux sous et de vingt sous—malheureusement (and he heaved a long-drawn sigh) vous avez là le seul sac d'or que je possède.*"

While concluding this remark, they had gained the second dark *escalier* from the bottom, and Pierre Godot, now deprived of his spectacles, could scarcely see even the tall and portly form of the soldier.

"*Où êtes-vous Monsieur le Militaire ?*" he at length cried eagerly, and trembling with apprehension.

"*Me voici,*" replied Précourt, almost in his ear. "*Ah ça, mon vieux,*" he pursued, in an angry tone

"oseriez-vous par hazard former des soupçons? Sacré-bleu, si je le croyais je vous passerai l'épée dans le ventre."

"Moi former des soupçons, Monsieur le Militaire!" returned the cringing, terrified money-lender. "Oh, non—Dieu m'en défende!"

"C'est bon," muttered Précourt, in the same rough tone, and they again relapsed into silence. In a few minutes they found themselves on the staircase, leading to the passage, which, owing to the street door having been closed, was even more sombre now than when De Forsac had ascended. The marquis groped his way first, and Précourt followed at a little distance. Pierre Godot could now distinguish nothing before him; and as he reflected with what ease Précourt might glide off with the gold, his heart beat violently. Avarice whispered the policy of securing the end of the cloak. Fear told him, that since it was obvious the soldier was somewhat alive to the suspicions he entertained, such a proceeding might be dangerous. The master passion, however, predominated, when, advancing a step or two, he seized hold of the cloak, and followed close on the heels of his companion.

"Qui est-ce qui me tire?" thundered Précourt, furiously.

"Oh! c'est moi, Monsieur le Militaire—c'est que je n'y vois plus clair, et que je crains de tomber à chaque instant."

"Lâchez, vieux menteur que vous êtes!" vociferated the soldier.

This only increased the alarm and suspicion of Pierre Godot, who immediately determined that the other merely wished to free himself in order to make good his escape. Instead of relinquishing his hold, therefore, as enjoined, he grasped the cloak even yet more tightly than before.

"Mille tonnerres! vous ne le voulez pas donc?" muttered Précourt, and liberating his left arm from its imprisonment, he dealt a sweeping back-handed blow on

the money-lender's head, which brought him instantly to the ground, when his *vielle carcasse*, as the soldier termed it, rolled from step to step, until it finally reached the bottom, even before De Forsac himself.

"*Mon Dieu, Précourt, es-tu fou ?*" he exclaimed, highly irritated, "*que viens-tu de faire ? nous allons avoir tous les locataires sur le dos ;—va vite—ouvres la porte.*"

Précourt stepped over the recumbent body of his victim, and hastened to open the door of the passage ; but no sooner had he reached it, than Pierre Godot, who was more stunned than hurt, and more anxious about his money than either, was once more upon his legs, and preparing to follow. De Forsac suddenly stopped him.

"*Ne fais pas de bruit—ne fais pas de scandale,*" he said, angrily ; "*ne t'ai-je pas dit que c'étoit un de mes anciens soldats ?—bête,*" he continued, perceiving that the money-lender still kept his eye riveted upon the soldier, while he vainly strove to liberate himself ; "*continue ta méfiance, et tu verras ce que t'arrivera à ton retour.*"

This hint somewhat subdued his manifestation of distrust, though it did not remove even a shadow of the sentiment itself. "*Ah, Monsieur le Marquis,*" he observed, still panting from his fall, and wiping the dust from his face. "*Cette affaire me coûtera bien chère—jamais je n'ai éprouvé des contrariétés comme aujourd'hui.*"

"*Bah !*" ejaculated De Forsac, relinquishing his hold. "*Tu es un vieux imbécile—mais dépêchons-nous—L'Anglais nous attend.*"

Once more Pierre Godot pricked up his ears at the sound, and as Précourt had now very unceremoniously quitted his post at the door, and was advancing along the *cul-de-sac*, he lost not another moment in following, keeping his sharp eyes intently fixed on him, and watching every movement with jealous attention, until he had gained the cabriolet of the marquis.

The *quartermasters* of the neighbourhood were no

yet dispersed, and when they beheld the dashing cavalier once more issue from the house, accompanied by the formidable and well-known Jacques Précourt, the terror of all who had ever dared to cast an eye of affection on Mademoiselle Pauline, the *figurante* of the *Ambigu*, and the equally mysterious squalid-looking old man, who was known to occupy a room on the same floor, conjecture was again afloat. By some, the visiter was supposed to be a government spy; others imagined him to be what, by the way, is nearly the same thing, an *agent de police*; while a few stoutly declared that it could be no other than the notorious Vidocq himself. But when they beheld the soldier, after having deposited a parcel under the seat of the cabriolet, in which the stranger and the old man had placed themselves, touch his cap to the former, and salute him with an "*Adieu, mon officier*," they were more puzzled than ever. When the cabriolet had driven off, one or two of the boldest, whose acquaintance was, however, confined to seeing and being seen by the *uncien* as he daily passed their houses in his visits to his pupils in the noble *art d'escrime*, now had the hardihood to advance and ask him who the stranger was; but Précourt, seeing the importance attached to this circumstance, was resolved to keep his secret. He stroked his moustache, looked fiercely round, and, without deigning to reply, folded his cloak closer around his large person, and pocketing the five-franc piece which De Forsac had given him at parting, strode majestically back to impart to Mademoiselle Pauline his recent adventure on the staircase, and to show his additional increase of stock to their suddenly revived finances.

CHAPTER II.

IN no capital in the world are the exigencies of the needy and dissipated, of a certain class, made more an object of speculation than in Paris. As for our Jews, or usurers, they are not only honest in comparison, but far inferior, both in their numbers, and in their practice, to the wretches who are every where to be met with in the French capital, ready to advance their money at an exorbitant interest, provided the security afforded by the parties is such as to preclude all possibility of risk. With the natives of the country themselves, these people are not only limited in their advances, but scrupulous to a nicety, in regard to public credit; since, as by the laws of France, a debtor, after a term of confinement, not exceeding five years, is entitled to his liberty, and becomes exonerated from any pre-existing claim, it not unfrequently occurs, that those who are heavily laden with debt prefer being incarcerated for a few years to giving up property, which probably constitutes their whole fortune and means of future subsistence. How far this may be considered equitable, or likely to establish a reciprocal good feeling between debtor and creditor, is a point which we leave to others to discuss. As, however, it is a generally received principle that whatever is done legally is done justly, we presume they are perfectly right. At present it is sufficient to know, that the money-lenders keep a regular list of names carefully noted down in their books, to which, in cases of necessity, they usually refer, and advance or withhold in proportion as their employers have been more or less forward in their liquidation of former engagements. This excessive caution, however, only bears reference to the gay and the dissipated among their own countrymen. With foreigners, and with

Englishmen in particular, the case is widely different, for, upon these they have a hold, which is equal to all the mortgages and freehold securities in the world; being, in the event of defalcation, almost certain of the debtor, and that for life. The high character for honourable dealing, moreover, for which certain English are accredited in Paris, is another guaranty for advances, which are made at enormous sacrifices on the part of the receiver, and consequently with corresponding benefit to the money-lender. But strict probity of character is not so much a consideration as amplitude of means, even though those means should prove to be of a reversionary nature. A money-lender goes cautiously to work, as, of course, all people of this description do, and naturally enough infers, that a man would rather make any immediate and temporary sacrifice, either from himself or through his friends, than continue in a state of captivity, to which death or payment alone can affix a term. The difficulty, likewise, of concealment, in a capital where the names and addresses of foreigners are kept registered at the police office, and are open to the inspection of all applicants, operates to the advantage of the creditor, and more especially to that of the money-lender, who, being more largely embarked, devotes his attention more immediately to the movements of his debtor, and is enabled, through the subordinate clerks in the Bureau de Police, many of whom are paid for the purpose, to ascertain whether there is any probability of his quitting the capital—a step that must necessarily be preceded by a demand for his passport. If apprized of such a fact, with the bills of exchange in his hand, or, what is the same thing, promissory notes, he goes on the instant to a *Juge de Paix*, swears that his debtor is about to leave the country, procures a writ of arrest, and hands it over to a *huissier*, and in less than twelve hours, the Englishman finds himself an inmate of St. Pélagie. Let it not, however, be supposed, that these people always wait until positively apprized of an intention to depart: it is

sufficient for them to suspect it—to imagine it probable, or even to admit the thought for a moment, and they at once decide on their measures. An oath costs them nothing, where their interests are at stake; and many have been the instances, not only in Paris; but in France generally, wherein a common creditor, possessed of a written acknowledgment of debt on *papier timbré*—for without a written acknowledgment, all attempts at arrest would be vain—has sworn before a *Juge de Paix* that his debtor was about to leave the country, and thereby obtained an immediate warrant for his apprehension, although such an idea probably never once entered the head of the individual thus detained.

On foreigners, therefore, and on Englishmen, as the richest of all foreigners, do these harpies contrive to feed; nor is it wonderful that they feed largely. In a capital where play is the principal pastime, and where, supported and encouraged as the gaming houses are by the government, young men are in the habit of entering them, not with that anxious, robber-like dread of detection which characterizes the frequenters of the London hells, but with a boldness and effrontery of carriage which marks the absence of all shame, or idea of impropriety, in a pursuit so universally followed, it must be obvious, that embarrassment, the inevitable result of play, must be much more general even than in the English metropolis. In London, those haunts, at least of a superior order, are known, and open only to a few; whereas the Palace of the Tuileries is not more familiar, neither is the Gallery of the Louvre more open to each individual, than are the several gaming houses in Paris—the Salon in the Rue Grange Batelier, the only place where hazard is played, alone excepted. In London, moreover, there is not the same facility of introduction, at least not to the same extent; for young men, having different occupations in life, and resources within their own immediate and several circles, are less thrown together. Consequently, they incur less hazard of acquiring information in regard to the nature

of these establishments, tending but too frequently to induce an irresistible feeling of curiosity, which a universality of acquaintance might but too soon, and too fatally, afford the means of gratifying. In Paris it is different, for here all Englishmen seem to be drawn together, as to one common centre, and the pursuits of one may be considered as the pursuits of all: so that, in the consecutive links which compose the chain of Anglo-Parisian society, there is scarcely an individual to be found who is not more or less familiar with these dangerous places of resort. Where, therefore, every Englishman is supposed to play, and where, as a necessary result of play, the credit of most with their bankers is exhausted long before the period originally anticipated, it is not wonderful that the money-lenders should reap rich harvests from their necessities, or that they should have the unblushing assurance to require the most enormous sacrifices for the temporary accommodation afforded, when it is well known that a man under the influence and excitement of play, is often ready to enter into terms that might even compromise his existence. It may, however, be inquired, in what manner the rich money-lender and the necessitous player are thrown into collision to an extent sufficiently great to admit of considerable profit to the former. There are few young Parisians of a certain rank in life to whom these men are not known, and when they foresee the probability of reaping any thing for themselves, by forwarding the views of either party, they do not hesitate to adopt a plan nearly similar to that pursued by De Forsac, in regard to our hero, contriving to make a good thing of their agency with the money lender, and often even not using the slightest scruple in borrowing from the party, who fancies himself infinitely obliged to him for procuring money at forty and fifty per cent., when, in fact, he is the dupe, at that enormous rate of interest, more of the pretended friend than of the money-lender himself.

But the principal auxiliaries of these people, are the

dashing, splendid females who frequent the *Salon d'Ecarté*. Although the greater number of these women have independent incomes, and form attachments with the young men they usually meet in these haunts without any view to personal interest, still there are many who are often without any other gifts than those afforded by their natural attractions, and on whom the irresistible impulse of play operates a desire to procure in any possible manner, the means of gratifying the favourite propensity. Most of these also have some sort of *liaison*, either with their own countrymen, or with strangers, and very rarely does an Englishman, who has been introduced into these seductive places of amusement, fail to form an attachment of some description. When, therefore, as a natural result of play, a lavish expenditure on his *chère amie* of the moment, has exhausted the immediate finances of a young man, and he has no longer the means of gratifying his favourite passion, or of conducting to the amusement of his mistress, she kindly suggests the possibility of his procuring a sum for bills, on such and such terms. These are ever in favour of the money-lender; and, furnished with the necessary powers, she instantly repairs to him, and bargains for a present for herself, in proportion to the amount required. A *billet de banque*, a set of valuable trinkets, or a cashmere shawl, is, in general, the result of her agency with one party, and, of course, the lover cannot do less than make her a *joli cadeau* also, for having been instrumental in procuring him money, which he does not consider dearly purchased at any rate of interest, however exorbitant, since it enables him to pursue his course of infatuation, and because he looks not beyond the temporary accommodation afforded. When the money is expended, and the borrower either wholly ruined, or, what is nearly the same thing, thrown into *St. Pélagie*, at all events, unable to command further resources, the fair agent forsakes him without the least ceremony, and looks out for some other lover whose prospects are yet in a flourishing condition.

Meanwhile, the trinkets or cashmere of the money-lender, and whatever else may have been given her by the ruined lover, are sent to the Mont de Piété—by the way, a much prettier name to designate what we vulgarly term pawnbrokers' shops—and she contrives to eke out the amount in play until another victim has been lured to her toils, who, in turn, when completely *plumé*, is sacrificed for another, and so on to the end of her career—that is, until she becomes old and ugly—when, deprived of every power of fascination, she sinks into peevishness, poverty, and contempt—all the malevolent passions deeply stamped upon her brow, and her mind torn with bitterness of envy, as she compares the more youthful and lovely of her sex with what she once was herself, and contrasts the homage paid to their charms with her own now despised and neglected condition.

It is not, however, the money-lender alone, who profits by the folly and facility of those careless Englishmen who are so unfortunate as to form temporary connexions with the more dependent of these women. Very frequently they have, for lovers, young men moving in the first sphere of Parisian society; yet in circumstances rendered nearly as indigent as themselves from play, whose credit with the money-lending race has long been at an end. These men do not blush to wink at—nay, to encourage *liaisons* between their mistresses and such Englishmen, as they believe to have long purses; and can most conveniently render themselves blind to what is passing, even though it should be evident to a whole company—by whom, however, be it understood, these things are considered and treated as matters of course, because they are known to be of every-day occurrence. The intimacy of the Englishman is confined to visits, at stated periods, and these are always so contrived as to leave little probability of the rival lovers, if rival lovers they can be called, coming in contact with each other. Let it not be supposed, however, that the original favourite has any kindly feeling in regard to his temporary successor—not so; he hates

him from his soul, and would cut his throat if he could. It is his interest alone that is consulted in the sacrifice he makes, for he knows that he can ask, and in fact it is mutually understood between the mistress and himself, that he shall occasionally obtain a *billet de banque* or two, which of course comes out of the successor's purse, under the plea of the lady having a long *mémoire* to pay, or now and then a *petite fille à doter*. These drafts affect not the interest of the *chère amie*, since they are extras in the concern, only purchased at the price of a display of a little more than ordinary affection and coaxing, and what the Englishman himself would, in his more serious moments, term humbugging. Fortunately for the French lover, his passion for his mistress is less powerful than his passion for play; and when, after a few days of comparative deprivation of this necessary indulgence, he finds some five and twenty or thirty pieces of gold piled before him on the *écarté* table, he is inclined to admit that an Englishman is a devilish convenient, good sort of fellow—especially as the favours of the lady are not his exclusive appropriation; but the instant these have disappeared, he changes his tone of feeling, and rests not a moment satisfied until he has procured another supply, when he continues once more at rest, until these in their turn have vanished. Let no one deem this picture overcharged; assertions of the kind we should not venture to advance, were they not founded on experience and an intimate knowledge of facts.

Before we dismiss this subject altogether—a subject certainly not destitute of interest, since these pages contain little more than a disclosure of facts, a knowledge of which may prove beneficial to many a future visiter to the French metropolis—we will advert to another description of persons, known as “*faiseurs d'affaires*,” who abound in every quarter of that capital. These are in general broken-down tradespeople, and what will appear singular to an Englishman, of both sexes; the greater proportion, however, are men, as might be ex-

pected ; and a more needy, worthless race of vipers, never existed. The following is the nature of their occupation. When they hear of a man of any respectability requiring money, they immediately request an interview, which the individual, happy to grasp at every chance of obtaining his object, readily grants, and the party proposing is invited to discuss the *affaire* on the following morning, over a copious *déjeuner à la fourchette*. Nothing is considered too good for a person who has it in his power and is willing to procure the so much desired supplies ; while hope, whispering the certainty of success, sends prudence out of the window, and champagne, claret, and delicious liqueurs, are served up with viands proportionately expensive. The host, and his half-starved, unshaven, filthily-attired visiter, sit down together, carefully avoiding, however, all mention of the subject on which they are met, until the repast is finished. At length the pretended man of business, after having literally gorged himself with the good things before him, enters on the affair in agitation. He says he knows an individual who is possessed of a quantity of wine, or corn, or cloth, or timber, or any other article, in short, which he is willing to dispose of for bills at a certain date, provided these bills be good, and that any respectable commercial house will—not pledge themselves, for this is never required—but, simply say that they believe them to be such. This point effected, he says he knows another person dealing in the stock, whatever it may chance to be, who is willing to pay cash for it at so much discount, which is, of course, heavy enough ; and that the only thing necessary on giving the bills, is to have the article transferred from the original seller to the last purchaser. Here there is no obvious difficulty ; the man wanting the money knows a house who will immediately declare his bills to be good—he refers the *faiseur d'affaires* to him, and the other exclaims—“ *Je connais parfaitement la maison—mais c'est une affaire excellente—tachez d'avoir du papier timbré pour tel et tel somme, et nous arrangerons*

l'affaire demain matin à déjeuner." He then takes his hat, swallows a glass of liqueur, or any thing else he may fancy—promises to lose no time in arranging the business on the following day, and walks out, leaving his host on perfectly good terms with his prospects, almost certain of success.

On the following morning he makes his appearance at the hour appointed, goes through the same operation of eating and drinking as if that meal were to be the last, and then proceeds to discuss the manner in which the bills are to be drawn out—a point that might have been settled on the preceding day, but which was necessarily have given him one breakfast less. The bills being duly executed, he then takes his leave, promising to lose no time in bringing the affair to a speedy termination, which, by the way, in nine instances out of ten, he does not expect to do; but what does that signify to him? He runs about a little, it is true, but for this is invariably recompensed. Instead, however, of attending to the business of his first employer, he goes to another person who wants money on the same terms where the same farce is played, and thence to another, so that he generally contrives to have four or five deals on his hands at the same moment, who each provide him with a breakfast, and a dinner or two a week. When he has completed the round, he returns again to the first, and assures him, while devouring another excellent meal at the expense of the party, that the affair is *en bon train*, and cannot but terminate satisfactorily. The same story is told to the others, and with the same result, and thus his visits are constantly and regularly repeated. On one occasion the excuse is, that the person referred to was from home when he called; at another, the man holding the stock is out of town for a day or two. Sometimes there is said to be an informal arrangement of the bills, for which he is sorry, as he is the cause of error, having himself dictated the manner in which they were to be drawn up. New stamps are then sent and fresh obligations given. In short, what with

pretext and another, these fellows frequently drag on affairs of this kind for a month or six weeks, although every thing is to be terminated each succeeding day; and when at length they find the patience of the parties wholly exhausted, they declare, with affected concern, that they fear the business is not to be accomplished. The holder of the stock does not consider the references sufficiently good, although Monsieur is, of course, known to be a most honourable man, and punctual in the fulfilment of his engagements; but (with a shrug of the shoulders) he must know *que celà ne suffit pas dans le commerce*. Sometimes, to make a show of exertion and influence, they pretend the goods are ready to be delivered for the bills, but that the person who had agreed to purchase in the first instance, now declines, under the plea of having too much stock on hand to run the risk of taking more. No blame ever attaches to the *faiseur d'affaires* himself. Oh, no—for he has had so much trouble—so much running about—and then, poor fellow, he loses all the commission and the *petits cadeaux* he was to have had at the termination of the business. However, he hopes, on some future occasion, to be more fortunate, and not to have such brutes to encounter, as those with whom he has now had to deal. It is certainly very singular, for he has been in the habit of negotiating these affairs for many years, and he never knew a similar instance of disappointment; but one cannot control circumstances, or the whims and caprices, or bad faith, of others. And thus he not only escapes being kicked down stairs, or thrown out of window, but even secures to himself an opening to future employment.

It is certainly surprising how these fellows contrive to find so many dupes, where speculations of this description are chiefly confined to the Parisians themselves, and principally to the highest classes of society. But it is a subject of even greater astonishment that, with their natural vivacity of character, the latter should patiently endure the tedious delays imposed upon them by

these designing villains ; yet so it is : and it would scarcely be credited in England, to what an extent this kind of traffic, if such it can be called, is carried on in Paris. Neither does the experience of one serve as a warning and safeguard to another ; for as these negotiations are, perhaps, once out of ten times successful, each individual fancies that his own business may, by some lucky turn of fortune, terminate according to his wishes. In short, seeing no other prospect of procuring the supplies they require, all are glad to cling to every shadow which can have a tendency to keep alive their several hopes ;—nor is it until after each pretext has been exhausted by the *faiseur d'affaires*, and the positive assurance is given that nothing can be done, that they abandon every expectation, and then their rage and disappointment are often without bounds.

Among many instances we have known of the kind, we will simply cite that of a French nobleman of our acquaintance—highly accomplished, sensible, intelligent, and a complete man of the world. In a transaction of this nature, he was humbugged—we must use the term—for nearly two months by one of these fellows, foolishly expecting each day that the succeeding morning would bring him the amount he required. Breakfasts, dinners, and wines, were not spared on the occasion, and new pretexts arose with each sun, until no more were to be found, even in the prolific brain of *Monsieur le faiseur d'affaires*, who, after having literally grown fat on the good things at his table, and put him to various expenses, the *papiers timbrés* for bills alone amounting to a couple of Louis-d'or, was very sorry to say that the affair, which the hour before had been going on so charmingly, had not now the slightest chance of a favourable termination. The anger of the nobleman was excessive, for he had sense enough to know he had been duped ; in fact, he felt while the transaction lasted, that there was every probability he would be duped, but until the home-thrust of positive disappointment came, he suffered his judgment to be hoodwinked by a feeling

which, if it could not be called hope, was certainly very much like it. He had, despite of his good sense, been building some very beautiful *châteaux en Espagne*—the sum for which he was in treaty was a very large one, and he would do this, and that, and the other with it. As for the *faiseur d'affaires*, nothing could be too good for him, since nothing could exceed the obligation he should be under to him. He was, moreover, to have had a handsome diamond ring, (the fellow never wore a glove in his life,) and some other present, which we do not now recollect. At length, however, the crisis came, and after our friend had literally kicked *Monsieur le faiseur d'affaires* out of his apartment, covering him at the same time with imprecations, he sat down to ruminate on his folly, when, as fast as his castle-building tumbled down, his restaurateur's bills came tumbling in. There was so much for *tourte de Périgaux*, so much for *roggons du café Hardi*, so much for *foie d'oie de Strasbourg*, so much for *coquilles aux champignons du café de Chartres*—in fact, for all the more rare and delicious *comestibles* that the *gourmand* in the Palais Royal could afford—and there were long charges for Champagne, Beaume, Pomard, Clos-vogos, Hermitage, &c. &c. &c., and so much for Curaçoa, Vespédro, Kirchewaser, Eau-de-vie de Dantzic—in short, so numerous were the expenses, that a knowing one would have said the *faiseur d'affaires* had literally done him, while a simple and a more honest man would have declared that he had undone him; but whether done or undone, or both, it is but too true that he was dunned in consequence, and had some difficulty, in his present emergencies, to procure the means of discharging the bills, while the only consolation he derived was in swearing eternal enmity to the whole host of swindling reptiles, self-designated *faiseurs d'affaires*.

Return we now to our friend Pierre Godot, the most original and singular of money-lenders of the first class, whom we left travelling at full speed through the dirty *Marais* towards the *quartier* of the *Chaussée d'Antin*.

During the whole of the drive, the old man had been ransacking his brain for a pretext to get hold of the bag, which lay safely deposited in the seat of the cabriolet, and so completely absorbed was he in the subject, that several observations, addressed to him by the marquis, were unheard and unanswered. At length the cabriolet stopped in the Rue d'Artois, opposite to Lafitte's, and he found it necessary to decide on some measure. Distrust was a feeling too deeply rooted in his nature for him to feel comfortable at the idea of leaving the marquis and the money behind him; moreover, if he even requested him to accompany him, the servant, who had seen the money deposited, remained, and there was nearly as much danger to be apprehended from him. Under all these circumstances, the old money-lender experienced nearly as much difficulty and embarrassment as the man in the fable with his fox, his goose, and his oats. As he hesitated how to act, De Forsac impatiently asked whether he intended to alight, or to keep him waiting there all day. The old fellow stepped slowly from the vehicle, lingered for a moment on the *pavé*, and was about to ask for his bag, when, reading in De Forsac's countenance, a no very amiable or conciliatory expression, he desisted and moved reluctantly forward on his mission. He had not, however, reached the *porte cochère*, when his fear once more overcame his prudence, and returning, he, with a desperate effort at indifference, asked for his bag, declaring that his head was now quite well, and that he could once more carry the money, without inconvenience, in his hat.

"*Et que désires-tu faire de ton sac?*" demanded the marquis, angrily. "*As-tu besoin de l'argent?*"

"*C'est que—c'est que—voyez-vous, Monsieur le Marquis, c'est que*"—

"*Au diable avec tes bêtises, réponds-moi—Crois-tu que ton sac d'or ne soit pas bien soigné ici?*"

"*Oh oui, Monsieur le Marquis, je sais que je le laisse entre bonnes mains, mais c'est qu'il y a plusieurs pièces*

de quarante francs, et que je voudrais les changer pour des simples Louis."

"*Ne t'occupe pas de celà, bon-homme,"* replied De Forsac ironically; "*puisque ce sac est pour moi, je me garderai bien de me plaindre de ce que tu y aurais mis des pièces de quarante francs—J'aime ces espèces là à la folie."*

Pierre Godot had now no other alternative left than to submit, and casting a wistful glance at the seat of the cabriolet, where his treasure lay deposited, and sighing from the bottom of his heart, he once more set out; but at every third pace, until he finally disappeared in the hall leading to the staircase, he turned to see that the cabriolet still remained in the same spot. De Forsac, although affecting indignation, was secretly amused at the terror of the old man; and when he beheld his grisly face peeping through a window of the *anti-chambre* leading to the office, to see that all was right, he suddenly gave the horse a lash, and sent him a few paces forward. Despair seized the bosom of the money-lender; he dropped his hat, and rushing, like one bewildered, from the room, bounded down the staircase, and reached the *porte cochère* in the space of a minute. When he arrived, the horse had been backed, and stood precisely in the spot where he had left him. De Forsac could scarcely refrain from giving loud vent to his mirth, as he beheld the hoary miser, pale with the extraordinary exertion he had made, his scanty gray hairs waving in the breeze, his mouth wide open, and his eyes strained to their fullest dimensions. What added, however, to the ridicule of his appearance, was his inability to utter a word, or to account for his being there; and when the marquis, affecting to believe that he had already despatched the business he had in hand, inquired whether he had seen the parties, and if he had found the *renseignemens* to be correct, he replied, scratching his head, and in a voice yet tremulous from recent fright—

"*Mais non, Monsieur le Marquis, je n'y suis pas encorè allé."*

" *Et que fais-tu donc ici, vieux pécheur—je t'ai vu il n'y a qu'un instant à la croisée en haut.*"

" *C'est que—c'est que—je croyais que vous alliez partir, Monsieur le Marquis,*" replied the money-lender, hesitatingly.

" *Oh, pour celà, c'est un peu fort. Va vite, arrange ton affaire, et si tu n'es pas de retour au bout de dix minutes, je partirai sans toi.*"

Pierre Godot now made nearly as much haste in ascending, as he had before made in descending the stairs leading to the office set apart for the transaction of English business, and appeared before Monsieur C——, the principal clerk, resembling rather a spectre than a human being, and much to the amusement of a young Englishman, waiting to receive a sum of money, for which Monsieur C—— was in the act of writing a check.

" *Monsieur,*" said the money-lender, approaching close to the ear of the man of business, "*connaissez-vous Monsieur Delmaine, un Anglais, et pourriez-vous me donner des renseignemens sur son compte ?*"

" *Silence !*" vociferated the chief clerk, who, by the way, is a very consequential and important personage, at least in his own estimation. "*Ne voyez-vous pas que je suis occupé ?*"

The money-lender started back a pace, completely intimidated by the sharp reproof of the man in office, and stood literally on thorns until he had finished filling up the check. He took out an old silver watch, suspended by a steel wire chain, and counted the minutes; three were expired, and every instant of delay was of consequence to him. He listened to every sound of approaching and departing carriages. Alas, that of the marquis might be of the number; he was in an agony of uncertainty, for the room in which he now was overlooked the Rue de Provence, and he had left De Forsac in the Rue d'Artois in the front. At length this state of suspense became too painful for endurance, and he resolved to satisfy himself whether all was right.

Stealing gently out of the office, he once more gained the anti-room, when cautiously approaching the window, and bending his meagre frame to nearly double its habitual curve, in order to avoid being seen from without, he directed his eager gaze towards the street below. The sight of De Forsac, engaged in conversation with a female, re-assured him, and he once more returned to the office, when, the business of the Englishman having been despatched, Monsieur C——, on the declaration of the old man that he had been referred to him by our hero himself, entered into such particulars in regard to the means and respectability of the family, as quite satisfied him that his money might be advanced without any great risk ; and Pierre Godot, with a much lighter step and heart, quitted the office in search of his hat. No hat, however, was to be found in the anti-room, where he had left it, and after a fruitless search of a minute or two, finding that his time was expired, and observing that De Forsac, now alone, was furiously lashing his horse, as if impatient to be gone, he once more descended to the street, and appeared at the side of the cabriolet.

“ *Qu’as tu fait de ton chapeau ?* ” inquired the marquis, unable to contain his mirth at the ludicrous figure he exhibited.

“ *Je l’ai perdu,* ” whined the old man ; “ *je l’ai laissé dans l’antichambre en haut, et il n’y est plus.* ”

“ *Eh bien, désires-tu savoir, que en est le voleur ?* ”

“ *Mais certainement, Monsieur le Marquis, je vous prie en grâce de me le dire.* ”

“ *Eh bien, Pierre Godot, c’est un gros chien Anglais, qui l’a emporté. Je l’ai vu descendre il n’y a qu’un instant ton chapeau à la guêlle.* ”

“ *Eh, mon Dieu, mon Dieu, le vilain chien Anglais,—voilà deux pertes que je viens de faire aujourd’hui,—et mes lunettes, et mon chapeau,—comment ferai-je pour ravoïr mon chapeau ?* ”

“ *Tiens, vieux imbécile, je te donnerai un écu pour*

acheter un autre ; mais monte vite, et dis moi si ton affaire est arrangée."

The money-lender got in, as desired, much to the amusement and surprise of the passers-by, who indulged in jokes, more or less piquant, according to their position in the scale of society. De Forsac was quite alive to the ridicule of having such an extraordinary personage for his companion, but as he was even much more alive to the possession of the two hundred and fifty pieces of gold which were about to be transferred from that companion to himself, he submitted, with the best grace he could assume. As soon as they had driven off, he inquired if the *renseignements* were satisfactory. Being told that they were, he handed the reins over for a moment to the money-lender ; then taking the bag from the seat where it had been deposited, proceeded, much to the alarm of the legitimate owner, to untie it.

"*Mais, mon Dieu, Monsieur le Marquis, que faites-vous donc ? — l'affaire n'est pas encore terminée,*" hastily exclaimed the old man, extending his right hand to prevent this infringement on his property.

"*Où tu main, vieux imbécile,*" replied De Forsac, thrusting his hand into the bag, and transferring a quantity of gold to the pockets of his trousers ; "*ne vois-tu pas qu'il faut absolument que nous montions ensemble chez l'Anglais, et prunes-tu laisser ce sac d'or dans le cabriolet sans courir grand risque de le perdre ? Crois-moi, ton or sera plus sûr dans mes poches."*

Pierre Godot was of opinion, that of two evils it was better to choose the least, and he watched the gradual disappearance of his gold into the several pockets of the marquis, with the eagerness of one who takes a view of a cherished object, and is fully satisfied that that object is seen for the last time. It did not occur to the money-lender that he was to be doubly reimbursed for this temporary sacrifice ; he only remarked, and was sensible of the loss of a certain number of pieces which he had been in the habit of counting every morning, perhaps, for the last twenty years of his life ; and his separation from

them was accompanied by a pang not unlike that which may be supposed to attend the dissolution of body and soul. Even when De Forsac, after having consigned the whole of the money to his numerous pockets, threw the empty bag into the street, and resumed the reins, Pierre Godot thrust his head on one side, and continued to rivet his dull but anxious gaze upon it, with the same melancholy interest with which a passenger at sea beholds the loss of some favourite object which has fallen overboard, and which the rapid advance of the vessel precludes all possibility of his regaining ; nor did he withdraw his attention from the direction in which it had fallen, until the sudden stopping of the cabriolet in the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin announced that they had gained the Englishman's residence.

Meanwhile Delmaine sat waiting with impatience the arrival of the marquis and his promised supplies. Three o'clock struck, but there was yet no appearance of his visitors ; another quarter of an hour passed away, and he became restless and peevish, looking at every vehicle that rolled by, and hoping that the last would prove that which he desired ; the half hour sounded, and he heard a cabriolet stop at the *porte cochère* of the hotel. These must be them, he thought ; and he sprang from the sofa to the window. A gentleman alighted ; the figure, as it glided swiftly by, resembled that of De Forsac, and he expected to see the money-lender following with his *sacs*. He was doomed, however, to be disappointed ; for instead of a usurer, it was a young and elegantly dressed female. " They will not come," he murmured, turning away from the window with real sickness of heart, and throwing himself upon an ottoman. He covered his eyes with his hand, and indulged in a train of mingled feelings, which are known only to men in his situation. Another cabriolet rolled rapidly along, and stopped in the next instant in front of the hotel.

" Here they are at last," exclaimed Adeline, who, pained by his agitation and disappointment, had continued to linger near a window overlooking the street.

Delmaine started from his recumbent position, and flew to her side, his heart beating with uncertainty, his eyes eagerly directed below. This time he was doomed to be disappointed. He saw De Forsac alight and after him followed one, whose long lank figure, cautious air and step, gave every indication of his being what he was, a usurer.

In a few minutes De Forsac entered the apartment followed closely by Pierre Godot, who, in the course of their ascent up the stairs, had kept as near to the wall as he had on a former occasion to the *ex-militaire* I had seen in court, and much to the amusement of the porter and several lodgers they encountered on their way, scrupled not to laugh aloud at the spectre-like appearance of the hatless money-lender, whose gray hair was scattered about by the wind, looked like so many bristling quills of the porcupine. Neither could Delmaine suppress a smile, on beholding so singular a countenance; for Pierre Godot's face was as white as its naturally sallow hue would admit, in consequence of exertion he had made in following the malicious De Forsac, who had literally bounded up the stairs with the sole view of annoying him. Even Adeline, though really sad at heart, was compelled to leave the room in order to conceal the laughter she found it utterly impossible to restrain.

As soon as the panting money-lender had recovered his breath, he turned to De Forsac, and asked if Delmaine was the gentleman with whom the business was to be transacted, when, upon being answered in the affirmative, he approached, and fixed his small gray eyes upon our hero with a scrutinizing glance, as if to discover whether there was any additional security for his money in his appearance. The examination evidently terminated in such a manner as to prove our friend Pierre to be an excellent physiognomist, for he had not so completely completed the survey of his person, than, with something that was intended for a smile, he declared, that if money was quite prepared, he was willing to enter upon

business immediately. Taking out his pocket-book and *papiers timbrés*, he now sat down to draw out the body of the bills, when he suddenly recollected the fate of his *lunettes*. What was to be done? he could neither write nor read without his spectacles, and unless provided with these, things must remain *in statu quo*. It was quite out of the question that he should go out and purchase a pair to suit his sight, as he must, in that case, have the marquis behind him, with his five thousand francs in his pocket; and Pierre Godot fancied that his experience had been by no means of a nature to justify his trusting him with that sum, at least until the Englishman's bills were duly executed. Delmaine, however, happened to recollect that Adeline had a pair of double glasses, set in gold, according to the fashion of the day, which, she said, had been given her by a gentleman, a very old and intimate friend; and he went to her dressing-room to ask for them. She hesitated, blushed, and even looked surprised at his request, but understanding the purpose for which they were required, she regained her composure, and taking them from a small mother-of-pearl box, in which she kept a part of her trinkets, handed them to him. Returning to the salon he placed them in the hands of the money-lender, whose sight, although too bad to admit of his either reading or writing without spectacles, was still good enough to distinguish the metal he most admired on earth. The beauty and richness of the setting attracted his notice, and after rubbing his eyes once or twice, in order to satisfy himself that he was not deceived, he at length exclaimed—

“ *Mais, mon Dieu, Monsieur le Marquis, ce sont les mêmes lunettes que je vous ai vendues il y a deux ans—vous m'avez dit que vous alliez en faire cadeau à une jeune et jolie demoiselle, dont vous étiez éperdument épris.*”

“ *Tu te trompes, vieux imbécile,*” interrupted De Morsac, somewhat angrily; “ *les maudites lunettes sont déjà bien loin d'ici—crois-tu que les lunettes ne se ressemblent pas?*”

" *Oui, oui, je le sais,*" replied the money-lender, "*mais je les reconnais par une marque particulière*" and, much to the satisfaction of De Forsac, he ap-
 peared to his glassy eyes, and said no more on the
 subject.

Had Delmaine been alive to any thing beyond
 business which he was about to transact, he would
 have been struck by the singular coincidence of Ade-
 laide's manner with this short dialogue. As it was, he was
 completely absorbed in anxiety about its termination,
 paying much attention to observations which came
 on his ear, and even flitted across his mind, but which
 made a dull and partial impression, and passed
 almost immediately.

The bills were soon drawn out, signed, and deliv-
 ered by our hero, who, in consideration of his thirty thou-
 sand francs of promissory notes, received from the hand
 of Pierre Godot the sum of twenty thousand in *billets*
de banque, carefully counted over at least half a
 dozen times.

Having secured the promised *écu*, with which he
 intended to purchase a second or third-hand hat, while, *ad-
 rim*, he bound his scattered gray hairs with the be-
 mentioned cotton handkerchief, the money-lender
 departed. De Forsac then carelessly observed, "I
 think I have managed this business very cleverly;
 you knew all, you would indeed feel very much in-
 debted to me; for, to tell you the truth, I have been
 since nine this morning running after this old fellow
 and devilish hard work had I to get him to ad-
 vance me the money at all."

"Indeed, I am most truly obliged to you," replied
 Delmaine. "It certainly was an act of very
 kindness, and I do assure you that I feel it as such."

"Do not say a word about it, my dear fellow,"
 rejoined the marquis. "I only wish," he pursued, tak-
 ing out his nearly empty purse, and, holding it up to
 show it, "that my own finances were in half as flourishing
 condition."

"Apropos, do you want any money?" interrupted Delmaine: "if so, I beg you will use the freedom of a friend."

"Why, I do not well know myself," replied De Forsac, with affected hesitation. "Let me see: I have a few Louis at home; however, as these will not go very far, I think I shall avail myself of your offer."

"What will you have?" inquired Clifford, unfolding the notes.

"You can give me a hundred pounds; that will be quite sufficient for the present."

Delmaine took two notes of a thousand francs each, and one of five hundred, and handed them to the marquis, who, with a cool "thank you," consigned them to his waistcoat pocket.

"And now," he observed, "it is high time that I should think of going home. I have not yet had an opportunity of performing my toilet to-day, and I am quite sick of wearing the same clothes so long." He might have added, that he was also fatigued with the weight of gold which encumbered his pockets; but as it by no means entered into his views to let our hero know he had any gold at all, he very wisely made no allusion to the subject, but leaving Delmaine fully impressed with a high sense of the obligation conferred on him, once more sallied forth on his return home.

CHAPTER III.

How strange and rapid are the revolutions operated on the human mind, when one strong and absorbing vice is suffered to creep over it in the insidious disguise of novelty or amusement! Our hero, although generous to a degree, had been remarkable at college for the

prudence with which his pecuniary transactions were conducted, and in no one instance had he been known to exceed the three hundred a year which had been allowed him from the moment of his entrance into Cambridge. Of debt he had ever entertained a certain degree of horror, not from any unworthy or selfish dread of the personal responsibility attached to such a state, but because his proud spirit could not brook the idea of obligation to a tradesman, by remaining in his debt an hour after the term stipulated for payment had expired. That such might happen to be his position, he could not deny, the daily examples which occurred among his associates furnishing him with sufficient experience, while they, at the same time, strengthened him in his determination to avoid the same annoyances. Such had been his feeling and conduct since his departure from the University; such, too, had been his sentiments, and his practice, only one month prior to the period at which we find him borrowing a sum of money from a filthy and contemptible money-lender, and that at a sacrifice almost without parallel in the annals of usury. Of the means of liquidation he had scarcely once troubled himself to think. It was true, that of the sum for which he had given his bills, two thirds of the amount were in his possession, and might be considered only as an advance of his own money, while the overplus with which this accommodation had been purchased did not amount to a year's income; yet to raise thirty thousand francs, or twelve hundred pounds sterling, in so short a period as six months, would have appeared to him, under all circumstances, at any other moment, an almost unattainable object. But our hero had now unhappily entered into the full spirit of play, and, like all other players, he suffered his better sense to be cajoled by the plausibility of his hopes. Many things, he fancied, might turn out in his favour before the expiration of the period; and although he, of course, could not expect to find a friend either in Dormer or his uncle, he would, on the instant, write to Sir Edward's steward, who received the rents

arising from his own little patrimonial estate, and desire him to mortgage it for the amount. Then he had an old college friend residing at Tours, to whom he had lent two hundred pounds some years back; this sum, together with some valuable trinkets which he had, worth nearly as much more, would assist him greatly in the discharge; but what he chiefly depended on was the large sum already in his hands; with this he proposed playing until he trebled the amount, when he would call in the bills, and pay off the thirty thousand francs to the usurer. This was his principal reliance; the others were mere subsidiary resources, and only to be resorted to in a case of extremity. Alas! poor Delmaine; he did not reflect, or rather he would not reflect, that the sum now in his possession might, in the course of a few weeks, nay, a few days, or even a few hours, be swallowed up at those very tables on which he most relied for the means of fulfilling his engagements! But what player ever yet reflected on the chances against him, or doubted that, with twenty thousand francs in his purse, he should be enabled to break every bank to which he might choose to oppose himself? Neither did it occur to him, that, even in the event of fortune proving unpropitious, he might be disappointed in his contingent resources; that the steward might fail in any attempt to raise the money, at least to the amount required; that his friend at Tours might be as much in want of cash as himself; or that trinkets are never held at a less valuation than by those who are about to purchase, or to advance money on them. Yet had these, or even worse reflections, crowded on his mind, they would at once have been dispelled by the golden visions which were, soon after this event, unfolded to his view.

At the precise period to which our story alludes, a new system of play, which had been duly and cautiously studied, was finally adopted by one or two wary and experienced frequenters of the *rouge et noir* tables. These men, who had passed twenty years of their lives in watching the turning up of the cards, and calculating

the chances of success, had at length discovered a game which it was pretended was infallible, and for some time it certainly was practised with effect. All Paris rang with the news. It was the theme of conversation in every circle, and excited universal astonishment and remark. This important discovery was the nine days' wonder—the philosopher's stone of the day. The road to immediate wealth seemed to be opened to every one possessed of common enterprise and common capital; and the very inspectors of these establishments trembled on their thrones, where, clothed in the spoils of thousands of victims, they had hitherto reclined in all the luxury and grandeur of their power. The whole tribe of proprietors, bankers, and dealers, took the alarm, and it became a trial of strength with address—a contest between overwhelming capitalists and petty speculators. It was a moment of intense and exciting interest: either the lesser streams diverging from the great channel were to be absorbed in its vast bosom, or, on the other hand, deriving their sustenance from its rich sources, to swell themselves into mighty rivers.

The anxiety of the public was not inferior to that of the persons connected with the several establishments. The rooms of the Palais Royal were crowded almost to suffocation with the numbers attracted to witness the effect of the new system. Heads were ranged above heads round the fascinating board, until those who were seated and engaged in the game could with difficulty respire, so great was the anxiety manifested to ascertain the result. It unquestionably proved to be the best game that had ever been attempted, and was attended with almost constant success. Encouraged by the prospect thus unfolded, numbers of individuals followed up the system, and were equally fortunate. Even tradesmen forsook their shops, to indulge in the momentary excitement, and to share in the spoil—a mode of making money, they thought, infinitely less tedious and more pleasant than measuring out tapes and ribbands. Consternation reigned amid the several members of the

establishments, from the proprietor, who stood raised above the anxious crowd of players watching the stakes and turning of the cards, with the eye of a hawk, to the *croupier*, who raked up and paid away the several *mises* as they were lost or won. When a large stake was lost, the former inquired the amount, with a pale cheek and an unequal voice, while the hand of the latter often trembled so violently, that he could with difficulty withdraw a stake of a few Napoleons which he threw down with a movement of disgust and impatience amid the heaps before him, while compelled to pay away notes to a large amount to the winning colour. Such were the scenes in the various *salons* of the Palais Royal; but at Frascati's, in the Rue de Richelieu, the players were of a more select order. Here none, save those who were provided with tickets from a proprietor, could procure admission, and these were chiefly confined to players on the system, and to the English. It was there a sort of secret trial of their several resources—a private *lutte*, on the issue of which hung the future existence of gaming-houses; for if the system should prove infallible, not even the enormous funds of the tables could withstand the inroads that must be made upon them. But, as it was impossible to put down the system, all that was now left for the proprietors was boldly to enter the lists against it, and, notwithstanding every temporary disadvantage, to continue the struggle until one party or the other was fairly vanquished.

One great point in favour of the banks was, that the system was slow in its operation, although hitherto secure in its effect, while the passions of the player inducing impatience were ever enlisted in their interests. Here coolness, nice calculation, and steadiness were indispensable; and could the adopters of the system be brought to waver in their game, or to deviate from their plan, they might finally be crushed, at least so far discouraged as to abandon it for some other which they might fancy more efficient, but which the proprietors knew must be far less dangerous. This was their chief

hope; for, versed as they were in the study of those passions, which they hourly contemplated in the gambler, and of which they were much better qualified to judge than all the Galls and Spurzheims that ever affected a knowledge of craniology, they expected sooner or later to find them deviating, either through their eagerness to grasp at immoderate gain, or from a feeling of too great security in their power, out of the beaten road, into some more wild and perilous path. They foresaw, that if one or two of these attacking columns could be thoroughly defeated, the remainder would become panic-stricken, and relinquish the contest.

Under this impression, the proprietors, like watchful generals, observed each several attack, and remarked how far the natural impetuosity of the assailants, carrying them beyond the bounds prescribed, was likely to entail their own discomfiture, overwhelming them under the mine which they too rashly and inconsiderately approached. They were aware that as many a victorious army, eager to follow up its advantages too far, has often, in the irregularity of pursuit, fallen into snares and ambuscades, artfully prepared, which have turned the fortune of the day—so in like manner those several enemies of their bank might be led to commit their advantages in the anxiety and unskilfulness of their measures. It was indeed a moment replete with interest to them, and we may add, a moment replete with the deepest importance—the most intense interest to society. Had the system been followed up, that is to say, had it met the expectation so generally entertained of its efficacy, the gaming-houses must necessarily have been closed for ever, for no capital, no wealth, could have withstood the slow but certain drains that must have been made on them. They must have discontinued the contest in despair, acknowledging the futility even of those *combinations* which had hitherto given them, which still continues to give them, a decided superiority over the player; and a host of victims that has since been added—a much greater that will be in after times—

would not have to curse the moment of weakness when they were first induced to sacrifice not only wealth, but honour, peace of mind, and even existence itself, at the unhallowed shrines of those who luxuriate on the tears of the heart-broken and the desolate—wretches who are ed from the rich and ancient inheritance of fathers whose offspring have died by their own hand, or are wanderers on the earth, ruined, despised, neglected, and unknown. Let the pale lilies of France become yet more pale as she reflects—if reflect she can on the subject—that the trials, the ruin, the demoralization of her sons, spring only from herself; that to the hateful vice of gaming, nourished and encouraged by her government, may be attributed crimes of the most glaring nature; and that from the poverty consequent on its indulgence, may be adduced the revolutionary spirit which pervades many classes of her citizens—men who, ruined in their fortunes, naturally seek, in a change of dynasty and events, simply a change in their own circumstances and position in society, and care not by what means it be accomplished, while they are ready to enter into the views, or execute the ends of the first demagogue who will take the trouble to excite them. Better far that the revenues of a country should be wrung from the abject brow of the labourer, nay, even from the tears of the orphan and of the widow, than reaped from a source so vile, so contemptible, so every way unworthy of a great and generous people, as these nurseries of vice—these emporiums of filth and iniquity. But we moralize—and that, when we can well avoid it, is a thing we seldom do.

We have observed, that had the newly adopted system been followed up, there would, in all probability, have been one vice less in the world, at least of a public nature, and the devil would have been cheated to a certain extent. Unfortunately, however, for the human, or rather the European race, his Parisian agents, Messrs. les Propriétaires, were too indefatigable in their watchfulness, and too correct in their surmises, to be

long deceived. The system failed, and with it the hopes of all Paris, who had very modestly expected to enrich themselves, from the banks of a few private individuals. This, however, would have been defrauding the revenue, and we all know how very shocking a thing it is to defraud the revenue; therefore we presume these things are very wisely and very properly ordered. We believe that the person who invented the system—a keen, cool, calculating player—contrived to win nearly a hundred thousand francs, with which he had the good sense to retire; but as far as we can learn, he was the only individual who had acted undeviatingly up to the system, not once suffering himself to be put out of temper, or led into an indiscretion, by the taunts which momentarily passed between the proprietors and their satellites, the dealers, *croupiers*, waiters—in fact, all the subordinate fry of the establishment. Two or three others were successful for a time but at length failed, as much in consequence of their own impatience, as from any fallacy in the system. The discomfiture, as the bankers had foreseen, intimidated the rest. They all declared it was not to be done; it was useless losing their time at that slow and calculating game; it was all a matter of chance, and they would return to their old mode of playing. The proprietors saw the plan relinquished with secret delight, for they themselves were well aware of its efficacy; yet with their natural tact and cunning peculiar to all these people they pretended, that if the system had been persevered in much longer, every individual embarked in it must have been ruined. Be that as it may, however, it was remarked by many, that from that period not half the number of pocket-handkerchiefs were applied to the sweaty brows of bankers, dealers, and *croupiers*, as there had been during this short reign of terror.

It was on the second day after his receipt of the twenty thousand francs from Pierre Godot, that Desmoline, while sitting at breakfast with Adeline, who has

been urging every argument to induce him to abandon play, was surprised by an early visit from De Forsac.

"Well, my dear fellow," he abruptly exclaimed, as he seated himself at the table, "do you wish to make your fortune? if so, the means are already in your own hands, and you have no time to lose."

"I doubt much whether there be any probability of that," returned our hero; "however, let us hear what novel expedient you have hit upon now—patent flying carriages, patent life preservers, or what?"

"Neither of these," resumed De Forsac; "only a patent mode of winning at *rouge et noir*."

"Ah," sighed Clifford, "such a patent would indeed be beyond all price; but how is it to be obtained?"

"You shall see," said the marquis, taking out his ivory tablet. "A new game has just been discovered, and so excellent does it prove, that every man who can command the means has embarked in it. Indeed, so closely are they attacking the funds of the several banks, that unless we begin immediately, there will be no part of the spoil left for us."

"You certainly appear to be very sanguine," remarked Clifford, smiling incredulously; "and I confess my curiosity is excited to know a few of the particulars; can you give me an idea of the game?"

"Here it is, already calculated," replied De Forsac, placing his tablet, on which were inscribed three columns of figures, between them, on the breakfast table, while he proceeded to point out the principle. "You see there are forty-five *coups* or stakes, each increasing in a certain ratio, and affording an immense latitude for retrieval, in the event of your being singularly unlucky in the outset. You must begin by playing one Napoleon; if you lose, put down two; that gone, stake three, and so on in proportion; if you win, you decrease your stake one number, and so on successively, until you arrive at the original stake of one Napoleon. This you continue until you lose, when your stake must again be increased. Now the result of this mode of playing is,

that if you win as many *coups* as you lose, you are still a winner of half your original stake, which, of course, leaves a decided advantage in your favour. Nothing can withstand it, my dear fellow; the game is excellent. The banks must be broken up. It is the only subject of conversation every where. All Paris is ringing with the beauty of the system; and French and English are flocking in from every quarter to reap the rich fruit of one man's experience."

"I confess it does indeed appear to be an excellent game," replied Delmaine, with animation. "What capital will be necessary?"

Adeline pressed her foot upon his, but without uttering a word; and when he raised his eyes to hers to ascertain the motive, he read an expression of regret and disapprobation of the plan.

De Forsac remarked the sudden manner in which he withdrew his attention from the tablet, and following the direction of his glance, he immediately discovered the cause. Unobserved by Clifford, he cast on Adeline a look full of malignant meaning, which brought the blood into her cheek, and in the next instant smoothing his brow, he carelessly observed,

"To play at Napoleon stakes, it will be necessary to have five-and-forty thousand francs."

"But where the devil am I to get five-and-forty thousand francs?" returned Delmaine. "I have little more left than fifteen out of the twenty thousand I got two days ago."

"Well, but you know, on the same principle, that to play half-Napoleon stakes, it will only require twenty-two thousand five hundred; so, in like manner, if we commence at five-franc stakes, the lowest that can be played, eleven thousand two hundred and fifty will be sufficient. When we have doubled that capital, as most certainly we shall, we can then play half Napoleon stakes; and when that again is doubled, we can increase them to Napoleons; and so on, in fact, *ad infinitum*.

"You say *we*," remarked Clifford "do you, then, intend to adopt the plan yourself?"

De Forsac coloured, as he rejoined, "Why, the fact is, that as I do not happen to have capital enough, just at this moment, to embark in it on my own account, I did intend, provided you should have no objection, to share with you in the profit or loss, according to the issue."

Again our hero felt Adeline's foot upon his own; but too anxious to embark in any thing which offered a prospect of retrieving his former heavy losses, he took no notice whatever of the movement, for he was afraid of encountering her look of disappointment.

"Why," he observed, "the profits arising from so small a stake as five francs, must, when divided, be comparatively nothing; however, if you particularly desire it—"

"Clifford, dear Clifford!" cried Adeline, rising and throwing her arms around his neck, despite of a fierce and furtive look from De Forsac, "let me entreat you not to enter into any of these wild schemes—consider what obligations you have imposed on yourself, and how soon they must be fulfilled. The result of the speculation can only be difficulty and ruin, for, depend upon it, none of these systems can be good."

Delmaire pressed his lips to her cheek, and was endeavouring to soothe her into compliance with his wishes, when the deep breathing of De Forsac arrested his attention. Turning suddenly round, he observed the cheek of the marquis pale, and his lip quivering, as if with suppressed rage, while his eye was directed towards Adeline, with an expression of remonstrance and vindictiveness.

In an instant his own became blanched, as the cloth of the table on which he leaned, and a thousand tumultuous feelings rushed with vehemence across his mind. "Ha! marquis," he exclaimed, springing on his feet, and shaking off the almost fainting form of Adeline;

"do you pretend to exercise any authority or influence over this young girl—speak, sir?"

De Forsac instantly recovered his presence of mind. "My dear fellow, are you mad?" he replied. "What possible influence can I exercise over her, and if I could, what right have I to do so? If it is the expression of my countenance that alarms you, I can only tell you that I am so exceedingly faint and ill, that a little brandy would afford me the greatest relief at this moment. If, after this explanation, you have any doubt on the subject, you had better question Mademoiselle Dorjeville herself."

"Forgive me, De Forsac," said Clifford, in a subdued voice, extending his hand; "I knew not what I said; but really the singular expression of your countenance did surprise me. Adeline, *ma chère*, *apporte le flacon d'eau-de-vie*."

The trembling Adeline slowly retired to execute the commission, and Delmaine fancied that he heard her sob, as she issued from the salon into the adjoining room.

"Well," resumed De Forsac, after having swallowed the brandy, "how do you mean to decide? As far as regards the partnership, I by no means wish that you should accede to my proposal, if you find it disagreeable, or imagine that you will be at all hampered in your game; but I confess, I could rather wish it, as I think we may both profit by the scheme."

Although the marquis had lost much of his influence, and had even been viewed with a certain feeling of distrust by our hero, since the night of Madame Bourdeaux's party, he was far from wishing to wound or offend him by a refusal, and he now felt more particularly disposed to oblige him, in order to make atonement for the recent hastiness of temper he had evinced. He, however, looked round to observe the expression of Adeline's countenance before he consented to embark in the plan at all. Adeline shook her head.

"How, in the name of Heaven, can you possibly hesitate?" said De Forsac, secretly vexed, yet now too much on his guard to betray his feelings—"such a—I will not say prospect—but certainty of success, never before presented itself to any man. In fact, so perfect is the system, that the banks must eventually close, and my only fear is, that such an event may take place before we can have even trebled our capital. If you have any doubt on the subject, come and witness the effect this evening, and should you not be convinced of the truth of what I say, on beholding the consternation which reigns among the whole tribe connected with the tables, I will name the subject no more."

"Well, nothing can be fairer than this," replied Delmaine; "and I shall certainly go and observe the effect of this famous system, before I engage in it myself. Adeline, do you consent to this?" he added, unwilling to oppose himself to her wishes.

"I see," said the young girl, "that it is useless to attempt to dissuade you from your purpose: however, as you only propose going to mark the progress of the game, you must promise not to take any money with you to-night."

De Forsac looked disappointed. "But if the system should prove to be particularly good this evening," he observed, "how annoyed we shall be at not having taken our capital with us."

"If the system is good at all," resumed Adeline, quickly, "it must necessarily be as good to-morrow as to-day; therefore, as the principal object is to discover what it actually is, and not to play upon it until it is fully proved to be good, you certainly cannot require any sum of consequence this evening. Promise me," she added, in a tone of supplication to Clifford, "not only that you will not play to-night, but that you will not run the risk of being tempted by carrying your money about you."

De Forsac bit his lip with vexation, and as Delmaine gave the desired promise, observed sneeringly, "Well,

I suppose, that as you appear to have exchanged your male for a female Mentor, we must only expect you to play the part of a looker-on to-night."

"Monsieur De Forsac," replied our hero, quickly and haughtily, "you have a sneering manner about you that is highly offensive to me, and I desire that it may never again be repeated."

The marquis was for a moment perplexed, for he apprehended he had gone too far; but soon recovering his presence of mind, he observed, in one of his most conciliatory tones, "Why, my dear Delmaine, you are become a very cynic: no one can jest with you, or take the liberty of a friend, without your firing at it immediately—really, you quite surprise me."

"There can be no necessity for surprise, Marquis," coolly remarked our hero; "I am far from being capricious, but I should conceive, that a really friendly feeling might be much better conveyed through any other medium than that which you sometimes think proper to assume."

Again De Forsac bit his lip, and coloured. "Well, we shall take care not to offend any more," he observed, somewhat seriously, and rising to depart. "In the mean time, what is to be your plan, and where shall we meet in the evening?"

"At Frascati's, of course," returned Delmaine; "and as I do not intend to play, suppose we meet at ten."

"Very well, at ten precisely you will find me there—good morning for the present. By-the-bye," he pursued, as he reached the door, "have you any commands for the Rue de la Paix? I intend calling, in the course of the day, and shall be happy to deliver any message to the divine Helen."

This question was asked more with a view to mortify Adeline, than to provoke Clifford, who felt the blood mount into his cheek at this profanation of the name of a being for whom, whatever might be his derelictions,

he had never ceased to entertain the highest respect, and he replied, somewhat fiercely,

"I should scarcely have imagined, Monsieur De Forsac, that your acquaintance with Miss Stanley was such as to justify any allusion to that lady, in such terms."

"Pardon me," said De Forsac, with every appearance of contrition, "I meant no offence; but really you seem so extremely touchy this morning, that I must positively decamp, in order to avoid being shot or run through the body. Good morning," he repeated, and, without saluting, or noticing Adeline, he took his leave.

For several minutes after his departure, Delmaine remained plunged in abstraction and silence. The whole tone, manner, and conduct of De Forsac during this interview, had greatly displeased him, and he now began to admit doubts of a more positive description in regard to his character. Hitherto his surmises had been of that vague, uncertain nature, which, however casually and involuntarily admitted, can never take positive hold on a generous and noble mind; but here he thought the cloven foot had in some degree been disclosed. The singular expression which he had detected on the countenance of the marquis, when looking at Adeline, at a moment when he fancied himself secure from observation, once more recurred to him, and, despite of his little proneness to suspicion, made a deep impression on his mind. Perhaps, however, he would have been induced to attribute this, *bona fide*, to the cause he had assigned, had it not been for the subsequent parts of his conduct. Yet there was nothing of a decided character in his apprehensions. They were of too general and indefinite a nature, and rather tended to perplex him, than to elucidate the mystery. From this state of mystification he was at length aroused, by the violent sobbing of Adeline, who sat in a distant part of the room. He turned, and beheld her weeping bitterly. Whatever might be his faults, Clifford possessed too much real feeling not to forget his own annoyances in

concern for one who, he still thought, had been tenderly attached to him.

"What is the matter, Adeline?" he inquired, rising and approaching her—"What can possibly have affected you now? Nay, nay, do not weep," he pursued, perceiving that her emotion only increased with every moment. "You cannot think how much you distress me by these tears."

"Oh, let me tell you all," she exclaimed, throwing her arms around him, and burying her face in his bosom.

Ha! thought Clifford, here is some dreadful disclosure coming. "Tell me what?" he exclaimed, abruptly and sternly, as he rose to his full height, violently disengaging himself in the act from her embrace.

Still her tears flowed fast, as she shrunk in alarm from the attitude of unkindness he had assumed. She seemed as if hesitating whether to proceed or not.

"Tell me what, Adeline?" pursued Delmaine, with the same seriousness and impatience of voice and manner.

"Oh, nothing," replied the young girl, in a faltering tone, "except that I feel very unhappy. A presentiment of evil weighs deeply, heavily, bitterly, at my heart, and I wish that you would not go to Frascati's to-night."

"Nay, my love, is this all?" said our hero, now relieved from the intense pressure of his fears, and assuming a more soothing tone; "why torture both yourself and me with such vague and absurd impressions? You cannot think what you have made me endure; I had absolutely prepared myself for some dreadful communication."

Again her tears flowed unrestrainedly, and she exclaimed, in a low tone, and in accents of the most perfect wretchedness, "*Ah, malheureuse que je suis!*"

"Compose yourself, dearest Adeline," urged Clifford, seating himself at her side, and encircling her waist with his arm; "do not, if you love me, give way

to these silly forebodings. Depend upon it, no evil shall befall you that I can possibly ward off."

"Oh, if I could possibly think so, there should be nothing wanting to my happiness," rejoined Adeline, still weeping bitterly; "but you may not always think thus favourably of me."

"And why not?" continued our hero, in a more animated tone; "there can be no reason why you should doubt my affection. Do not, therefore, make me uncomfortable, by indulging in these gloomy anticipations."

"Well," said Adeline, in a trembling voice, and wiping away her tears, "I will endeavour to conquer it; but do so far comply with my present weakness as to promise that you will not go to Frascati's this evening. I cannot account for my feelings, it is true; but I have a painful impression that disquietude and evil will be the result, if you do."

"Adeline, dear Adeline," replied Delmaine, with tenderness, "ask me any thing else, and I will comply with your wishes; but really you must excuse me if I do persist in going, merely to prove to you the fallacy of such impressions. Besides," he pursued, in the hope that his observation would be an additional argument in his favour, "what would De Forsac say, when informed that I had failed in my engagement because you chanced to have a foreboding of evil? Why, there would be no end to his satire, and he seemed disposed to be severe enough this morning. Really, you are quite a second Calpurnia," he concluded, smiling.

"Do as you like," resumed Adeline, dejectedly; "but recollect also, that had Cæsar been guided by the secret forebodings of Calpurnia, he would not have perished beneath the hands of conspirators—not, at least, at the precise moment he did."

The point was now given up, and Clifford endeavoured, by kindness and forced gayety of manner, to cheer the spirits of the young girl; but his efforts were unsuccessful, and when, at a late hour, he left her to

join the marquis at Frascati's, she threw her arms around him, burst into tears, and when he had finally torn himself from her embrace, once more gave unrestrained indulgence to her heavy and melancholy grief.

CHAPTER IV.

THE heart of Delmaine beat with a variety of contradictory emotions, as, issuing from the Rue de Richelieu into the court-yard of Frascati's, he beheld that temple of luxuriousness and dissipation lighted up with a more than ordinary splendour. Ascending the broad flight of stairs conducting to those apartments, where all the more tumultuous passions peculiar to such a place were, even at that moment, in full operation, he advanced through the crowd of insolent lacqueys, who lined the *anti-chambre*, to the principal entrance; but here his further progress was arrested by an individual who demanded his card of admission. He confessed that he had none, and was then told that the strictest orders had been given not to admit any person who came unprovided with a ticket, and especially on that evening, as the company was particularly select, and a ball and supper were to be given. This information only tended to increase the anxiety and eagerness of our hero, who, fancying that De Forsac, if there, could of course procure him the *entrée*, asked the man if he knew him, and whether he was yet arrived.

"*Ah! oui, Monsieur,*" replied the doorkeeper, with a peculiar smile, and looking with a significant expression at his fellow servants, who stood grouped at a short distance, attending to their colloquy; "*nous le connaissons bien, Monsieur le Marquis; il vient d'entrer il y a que cinq minutes.*"

"Then," said Delmaine, "go in and say to him, that the English gentleman, whom he expected, is waiting to speak to him."

The man observed that he could not quit his post ; but he desired another servant to execute the commission.

In a few minutes he returned, followed by De Forsac, who apologized for his neglect in having omitted to state that a card from one of the bankers was necessary to entitle him to admission. "However," he pursued, "you did well to send for me—there is now no further obstacle, and you can enter."

"Not so," said the man in charge of the door, and arresting Delmaine, as he was about to pass ; "my orders are peremptory, and Monsieur cannot enter without a ticket."

"But he has been here fifty times before," said De Forsac, "and his person must be nearly as familiar to you as my own."

"Not altogether," rejoined the tenacious Cerberus, archly ; "yet I recollect Monsieur perfectly—but since *le système* has been introduced, my orders have been positive, and no one can be admitted, unless he either produces a ticket, or is passed by a proprietor."

"Stop," exclaimed De Forsac, availing himself of the hint, "I shall manage the affair in a moment," and he returned in quest of one of the proprietors. In the next instant he re-appeared with a stout, dark, keen-eyed man, who, bowing courteously, apologized to our hero for his having been kept waiting, and after having reprimanded the doorkeeper, who muttered that he had merely followed his instructions, begged that he would enter and join what he called their *réunion distinguée*.

During the few minutes he had lingered in the *anti-chambre*, Clifford remarked that several individuals who had applied for admission were refused the *entrées*, in consequence of their being unprovided with tickets, and some of these, both French and English, were evidently of high respectability. He, therefore, was prepared to

expect a society the most select of its kind, and when ushered by the proprietor into the splendid suite of apartments, it was under an impression that he should behold none but persons *les plus distinguées*, as he had been told.

Unquestionably nothing can be more seducing and exciting than the appearance of a gaming table, when the rooms are brilliantly lighted up and full of company. The heaps of notes and gold that are piled upon the tables, as if destined to become the property of the first player of spirit and enterprise—the rich tints of the cloth, which acquire additional beauty from the softened light of the lamps—the lucky and occasional falling of the ball at the *roulette* table into the number backed by the player, securing thirty-six times the amount of his stake, and the long run upon a favourite and well supported colour at a *trente et quarante* table, together with the facility of obtaining every thing that can satisfy and luxuriate the palate—all these things tend to fascinate and to subdue, while the passions, not yet called into more active and painful operation by heavy and repeated losses, leave wide and unrestrained dominion to the senses alone. If these, then, are the effects produced by an introduction to haunts where the society is confined entirely to men, how much more alluring must the scene appear, where, as is ever and exclusively the case at Frascati's, the rooms are moreover filled with women of that splendid and more select description, we have already described as the frequenters of the *salons d'écarté*—women, who gayly challenge fortune with their purses, and lovers with their dark and sparkling eyes, and who, whatever may be their failings or their weaknesses, are often gifted with minds of a superior order, with passions, which scarcely know a diminution in their intensity, and with wit, and elegance, and ease of carriage, sufficiently demonstrative of the sphere in which they once moved, and which is never wholly lost sight of in their subsequent life? These are the women who are most to be feared in

these dangerous assemblages; for although it cannot be denied that, even at Frascati's the females are not all of the same stamp, yet the comparative vulgarity and general inferiority of these, rather serve as foils to set off the manners and accomplishments of the others, who seldom fail to cast the spell of their fascinations around the hearts of the young, the inexperienced, and the more generous of nature, a fascination which is not easily shaken off, and which eventually leads to the last stage of demoralization.

Several of these females were seated round the *rouge et noir* and *roulette* tables, habited in elegant *costumes de bal*, and staking their money with an earnestness that would have surprised a stranger, thrown for the first time into the heart of so novel a scene—their eyes beaming with animation when successful, and firing with impatience when they beheld their gold raked up by the pitiless *croupier*. Whenever they hit upon a lucky run, they were all smiles, frequently turning round and addressing some amiable remark to those who sat next to them; but when they lost, they were *gênées* in their movements, the place was exceedingly hot, or those who stood behind them were found to press too heavily on their magnificent plumes, and were requested to give them more room. The men who encircled the tables were principally players upon the system, and a motley and singular group. Here might be observed an elegant looking Englishman, dressed in the last style of fashion, and throwing down his notes with a *nonchalance* which might have been translated into a sort of shame at the idea of being found guilty of nice calculation in a game in which he wished it to be supposed he indulged rather as an amusement, than with a view to gain. There sat a Frenchman of sallow, emaciated, shabby, and ignoble appearance, casting his quick dark eye at the cards, which he mentally counted after the dealer, and eagerly searching, if a loser, to detect an error—now striking his forehead with his hand, after a few unsuc-

cessful *coups*—now laughing, and talking to himself, when fortune appeared to be enlisted in his interest.

Here, too, might be seen a player, habited half à l'Anglaise, half à la Française, one of the number of those old residents in Paris, who make the public gaming tables the means of keeping an apology for a carriage, with which they affect to maintain a sort of style; and who, in the expectation of winning a certain sum for their daily expenses, take their stations at the *rouge et noir*, and *roulette* tables, as regularly as the dealers and *croupiers* themselves. They were chiefly players upon the system. Amid, these, however, might be seen others of more careless carriage and habits. There lounged a gay young Englishman, who divided his attention equally between his ill-supported game, and two splendid looking women, who sat on either side of him, supplying the latter occasionally with a few pieces, as their own little banks were broken, and, in consequence, the object of rivalry between them. Opposite to him lingered a young Frenchman of equal age, and supported in the same manner, expressing himself with vivacity when he lost, and hesitating not to borrow from his fair companions the instant his own funds became exhausted. The contrast offered by the tone and manner of these was striking. In fact, every variety and shade of character might be traced throughout the throng, which was numerous indeed, the tables being crowded not only by those who were seated at the game, but by a triple row of players, who, incapable of procuring seats, now stood leaning over those who occupied them, and betting, either in pursuance of the new system, or on the principle of chance, as their several inclinations and caprices induced.

Closely wedged in round the tables were several of our hero's acquaintance, and, among others, Captain O'Sullivan, who no sooner beheld him than he relinquished his seat, and came forward with cordiality to join him. They had only occasionally met since the affair with De Hillier; but O'Sullivan had not ceased

to entertain a very great respect and esteem for him since that period; and the highest eulogium he had ever been known to pass, was on the coolness and courage manifested by Clifford on that occasion.

"Faith and I am glad to see ye, Mr. Delmaine," he observed, shaking his hand with warmth. "I suppose ye are one of us—a player upon this new system."

"Not yet, captain," said Clifford, smiling, and returning his friendly pressure of the hand; "but I fancy there is some chance of my becoming one. At present I am only here to witness its effects."

"Oh, it is beautiful, sir," rejoined O'Sullivan; "a mint of money may be made at it, and ye are wrong in not commencing immediately."

"Nay, one night cannot make much difference," resumed Clifford, "and I purpose commencing it to-morrow; besides, the truth is, I have not brought any money with me."

"Here is as much as ye will require," replied the generous-hearted captain, thrusting his hand into a pocket of his trousers, and pulling out a handful of notes. Make use of them as if they were your own, Mr. Delmaine."

Our hero, however, declined the offer, assuring him that he had entered into a firm determination not to play that night. "But how is it," he pursued, "that you have given up play for the evening? I thought the system required deep attention and perseverance."

"So it does," replied O'Sullivan, "and that is precisely the greatest bore I find about it. Indeed, the play is almost too steady and too certain for me. I like some little incertitude to keep the interest alive, and make the game more dashing. Here have I been playing for a long hour, and after winning merely a trifle of about forty Louis, find myself heartily tired, and well inclined to give it up for the night."

"Well, but I understood, that to render it successful, the game must be followed up for many consecutive hours—nay, during the whole sitting of the bank."

"True," said the captain; "but I am sure it will never suit my Irish blood to wait so deliberately. It is nearly as bad as angling a whole day for the mere pleasure of getting a nibble or two, without hooking a fish, worth carrying home. By J——s, I would almost rather lose my money, at a dashing game, than win it in this dribbling mercantile fashion."

"I thought you admitted the game to be excellent," said Clifford, smiling.

"Certainly," replied O'Sullivan, "as for the mere excellence of the game, in the way of securing one's money, it is well enough; but it is the tediousness of the system, that annoys and perplexes me. I like to put down a heavy stake, and when that is won, to have done with it at once."

"But recollect, that that large stake might also be lost; whereas, in the present instance, your chance of success is almost indisputable."

"I grant ye all that, Mr. Delmaine," said the captain, somewhat puzzled; and applying a prodigious quantity of snuff to a rather rubicund nose: "but ye see our hot Irish blood will not rest quiet, and calm, and comfortable, during so many successive hours. In short, it is too tradesman-like a method of winning money to please me altogether."

"Still you admit the system to be good?" pursued Clifford.

"Excellent, incomparable," replied O'Sullivan—"the best in the world—at least"—after a pause, and another pinch—"for those who like it."

After some further conversation, the captain proceeded to point out a number of characters seated around the table, with whose persons his long residence in Paris had made him familiar, and among others, a tall, middle-aged, and remarkably gentlemanly looking man, behind whom he stood, and to whom his attention had been more particularly directed.

"That," he observed, in answer to a question from our hero, "is Lord C——, a countryman of my own:

a man of fascinating manners and appearance, and, although past the meridian of life, a very general favourite with the sex. That handsome, careless-looking youth, sitting nearly opposite, and evidently more occupied with the female at his side than with his *rouge et noir*, is his lordship's eldest son. He is a wild, thoughtless lad, and not half so steady as his brother, whom you may observe seated at the roulette table in the adjoining room, calculating his game with all the nicety and caution of an old and prudent speculator."

Clifford glanced his eyes from his lordship, to the young man, whom O'Sullivan had pointed out, and was struck by the mingled expression of modesty and rakishness, which pervaded his countenance. His somewhat florid cheek was only covered with a slight down, and here was a general air of extreme youthfulness about his person, which denoted his age not to exceed twenty years. He had been losing *coup* after *coup*; and yet with an air of indifference, and gayety of manner, which marked his utter disregard for any thing beyond the mere amusement of the moment. At length he was reduced to his last stake, and as the female alluded to by O'Sullivan had uniformly backed the colour of his choice, she too had been unsuccessful. He whispered some remark in her ear, when she immediately cast her eyes, filled with languishing expression, on his lordship, who appeared by no means insensible to their power, and following the example of the young man, threw her last four or five pieces of gold upon red. Thirty-nine came up on the black, and she took one of the small rakes, used for the purpose of drawing the stakes, when paid from the opposite side of the table.

"If forty should come up on the red," remarked the young Englishman, laughingly—

"*Bah! ce n'est pas possible!*" she exclaimed. "*Si nous ne gagnons pas ce coup-ci, nous ne gagnons jamais.*"

"*Quarante; rouge perd, et la couleur,*" drawled forth the croupier. The female dropped her rake, and looked

grave; but, in the next instant, turning to observe the expression of her companion's countenance, she was so struck by the peculiar and ludicrous air of disappointment his features exhibited, that she could not refrain from bursting into an immoderate fit of laughter, which evidently discomposed the whole tribe of bankers, and the game was for a moment discontinued, until, relinquishing her seat, she finally disappeared in the ball-room.

"D——n the *rouge*," said the young man, impetuously rising, and following: "I'll play no more at the confounded game."

"Who is that gentleman?"—" *Qu'est-ce que c'est?*" "Why is the play interrupted?"—" *Qui est cette dame?*" "They have put me out in my calculation," burst nearly at the same instant from various players upon the system, who had been too deeply engaged in their speculations to attend to any thing else.

These, and many others, were the observations almost simultaneously preferred by the crowd of selfish beings surrounding the table. His lordship heard them all, but looked and acted as if he had not. He had been playing upon the system during the night, but deviating for a moment in favour of a fancy game, had won a very considerable stake on the very *coup* on which his son had lost his last Louis, and he busied himself in counting his notes, until the momentary interruption had ceased, and the game was recommenced.

In a few minutes the youth returned from the ball-room, and, with a certain archness of expression on his features, which attracted the attention of Delmaine, who yet lingered with O'Sullivan, immediately behind the chair occupied by Lord C——,

"There is a lady in the next room," he observed, in an audible whisper, leaning, and addressing his father, "who wishes particularly to be introduced to you."

"Nonsense! Henry," rejoined his lordship, with a look which might, without difficulty, have been interpreted, "are you jesting or in earnest?"

"Upon my soul it is a fact!" replied the youth. "Did you not remark that fine woman who sat near me on the opposite side?"

"I did!" said his lordship, eagerly, his eyes lighting up with unusual vivacity. "What of her?"

"She is the *belle dame en question*, and is dying to know you. If you will go into the adjoining apartment, leading to the dancing-room, you will find her seated alone on a *canapé*, at the further extremity, on the left as you enter."

"A d——d fine woman, indeed," observed his lordship, half aside. "But who is to play my game in the mean time? I dare not trust you, since you are so wild; besides, you understand nothing, I fancy, of this new system?"

"Indeed you are mistaken!" was the reply. "Let me see—you stake according to the figures on the card, increasing when you lose, and decreasing when you win. Is it not so?"

"Precisely! Now pray, Henry, be cautious, and do not, on any account, deviate from the mode of playing I have adopted."

"Oh, you need not be alarmed," replied the young man. "I shall follow it up strictly, and you may expect to find your capital doubled on your return."

"But you must introduce me," said his lordship.

"True," said the youth, rising from the seat which his father had the instant before relinquished to him, "I had nearly forgotten that. Come along then."

Lord C—— adjusted his cravat, erected his fine person, and, taking the arm of his son, sauntered into the adjoining room.

"What do ye think of that?" asked O'Sullivan, taking a pinch of snuff, and shrugging his shoulders.

"Why, to tell you the truth, I scarcely know what to think, Captain. I suppose, however," pursued our hero, smiling, "that it is because the 'hot Irish blood will not remain quiet, and calm, and comfortable, during so many successive hours.'"

"Ah, I see ye are severe, Mr. Delmaine," observed O'Sullivan, good-humouredly.

Once more this hopeful scion of nobility re-entered from the ball-room, after having presented his father, and seating himself before the large heap of notes and gold which his lordship had left behind him, recommenced playing. For a few minutes he continued to stake his money in the manner in which he had been directed, and according to the principle of the pricked and numbered card which lay before him, but finding the game insupportably tedious, it being necessary to wait for particular *coups*, he at length, in his impatience, threw three or four notes, to a large amount, upon the table.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said a tall, smirking, obsequious-looking gentleman, who sat on his left, "but I believe his lordship has been playing on the system during the evening, and not only this stake, but the *coup* itself, is decidedly contrary to the principle."

"Sir!" exclaimed the youth, drawing himself back, and in a tone which was meant to say, "And pray who the devil are you, who take the liberty of interfering with my game?"

The gentleman who had volunteered this remark, was no other than our old acquaintance, Mr. Darte, who had contrived to raise the eleven thousand two hundred and fifty francs necessary to enable him to pursue the system at crown stakes, and he had, for the last day or two, been indefatigable in endeavouring to procure the means of renewing a stock of pumps, silk stockings, &c. for the ensuing winter campaign. He knew that the gentleman who sat next him was Lord C——, and to sit near a nobleman was, in Mr. Darte's estimation, an honour not very remote from that of conversing with one—both these advantages he deeply coveted. He had made one or two attempts at conversation during the evening, by addressing some observations to his lordship respecting the game; but the cool and monosyllabic replies which they had elicited, had

finally damped his ardour, and he was reluctantly compelled to desist. When, however, he saw the seat vacated by his lordship filled by his son, he fancied he should have a better chance, and already, in imagination, he pictured several very delightful and superior parties, to which he might be the means of introducing him. He was yet hesitating in what manner he should break the ice, when the deviation of the young man from the game pursued by his lordship, furnished him with a pretext. But the haughtily-aspirated "sir!" damped his forwardness for the moment, and he felt himself colour with vexation and wounded pride. He was resolved, however, to make another effort, and once more resumed, in even softer and more blandishing accents—

"I hope, my dear sir, that you will excuse the liberty I have taken, but his lordship appeared to me to have been playing so very excellent a game, that I thought it would have been a pity not to warn you that you were departing from the system."

"D——n the system, sir," rejoined the youth, whose original dislike to his fawning and obtrusive neighbour, seemed to have increased with the familiarity of his last address; "I have heard nothing but the word system from morning till night."

Mr. Dart made another attempt. "But do you not think, that as you are playing for his lordship, and with his money, it would be better to continue the game he has commenced!"

Another distant and expressive "Sir!" however, yow finally disconcerted him; and, colouring deeply, he turned to conceal his mortification, by addressing some person of his acquaintance on the opposite side of the table.

The heavy stake which the young man had thrown down, amounting to nearly half his lordship's winnings, was lost. Anxious not only to regain this, but to win a sum sufficiently large to leave some profit to himself, an object which he evidently had in view from the very first, he now staked one of even greater

magnitude, and had the mortification of seeing the *croupier*, at the termination of the *coup*, rake it up, and deliberately spread out the notes on the pile before him. He now became restless and nervous; his lordship might be expected every moment, when, instead of finding his capital doubled, there was every probability that he would not find a Napoleon left. Two or three other unsuccessful *coups* had reduced the original fund to less than one half, and a lucky *paroli* alone could retrieve the young man's losses. With a singularly blended air of disappointment, desperation, and carelessness, he threw the whole of the remaining notes and gold upon the red—then turned and looked another way, that he might not witness the result.

"*Deux!*" said the dealer, after having turned the first row of cards for the black. A movement of impatience proclaimed the little hope of success entertained by the youth. Another movement, however, of eagerness, proclaimed his pleasure and satisfaction, as he heard the same voice continue, "*Un, rouge gagne, et la couleur perd.*" He turned to receive his money.

"*Quelle est la mise de Monsieur?*" inquired the *croupier*, in evident dismay, at the quantity of notes which he now busied himself in separating and counting, with his rake, nearly as expeditiously and dexterously as a banker's clerk would with his fingers.

"*Dix mille francs,*" was the reply.

The whole *paroli* belonging to the establishment stared with surprise. It was a very large stake for so young a player, and the highest that could be played for without the permission of the proprietors. There was a general and silent pause while the *croupier* counted out and paid the amount of the stake.

"*Messieurs, faites le jeu,*" at length exclaimed the dealer, in the dull monotonous tone peculiar to these people.

"Stop a moment," said the youth, who, elated with his success, now hoped that fortune had taken a turn in his

favour. "Will you allow me to play one *coup* of twenty thousand francs?"

Again there was a pause in the game, while the proprietors consulted together on the subject. At length, they determined in the affirmative, and he threw the whole amount once more upon the red.

The dealer slowly turned the card—"Un!" he at length exclaimed with vivacity. The features of the bankers brightened at the sound, while those of almost every individual around the table as suddenly fell; so general is the feeling among players to desire the success of one of their fellows against the bank.

Again the dealer slowly turned his cards for the red—"Quarante," was the result he pronounced, and the rake of the eager *croupier* was already extended for the twenty thousand francs.

"Stop," said a gentleman, who had counted the last row of cards after the dealer; "you have made a mistake; there is a tenth card too many on the red; the *coup* is *trente-et-un après*."

The proprietors looked grave, leaned on the table, counted the cards also, and were finally and reluctantly compelled to admit that the gentleman was correct.

"A devilish lucky hit," remarked the young man, speaking to himself, yet looking his thanks at the same moment, to the gentleman who had discovered the error; "I shall try it again."

The result of the *coup* just described was, that the money of the player was put in prison, as we believe the phrase to be—that is to say, it became optional with himself either to forfeit one half of his stake, and withdraw the remainder, or to leave it on the table, selecting which colour he preferred. If the next *coup* terminated in favour of the bank, it was lost to him for ever; if in his own, all the advantage that he could derive would be the security of his actual stake, without receiving any thing from the table. And this, by the way, may serve as a hint to the uninitiated, to show how decidedly against every player are the chances at *rouge et noir*,

where, at every *coup* of thirty-one on each colour—that is to say, where, literally and strictly speaking, neither party wins or loses—the bank have still the privilege of claiming one half of the several stakes, no matter what may be their amounts, then lying upon the table.

“Do we still continue the stake of twenty thousand francs?” inquired the youth.

One of the proprietors, to whom the question had been addressed, replied in the affirmative, and the deal was renewed. Again the red was successful, and the game remained in the same position as prior to the *coup* of *trente-et-un après*.

“If I had ten thousand pounds I would risk it on the red,” exclaimed Mr. Darte, speaking once more rather at his neighbour than to him; “the run upon the colour appears to be completely established.”

The spirit of opposition seemed to have got into the youth, and the dislike which he had evidently conceived for the person of Mr. Darte, appeared to extend equally to his advice. With a movement of petulance he took up the notes from the red, on which he had originally staked them, and threw them on the black.

Again the cards were turned. *Deux !*” said the dealer, with a trembling voice, and the proprietors drooped their crests at the sound.

“How lucky to have changed his colour at this precise moment,” whispered the gentleman who had rectified the error in the *coup*, to a friend who sat next to him.

“I am devilish glad of it; he plays dashingly, and deserves to win,” was the reply.

“*Un, rouge gagne, et la couleur perd,*” continued the dealer. Never was the eager voice of the wretch who pronounced this decision more hateful than at that moment. The young man leaned over to count the *coup*; one or two other players did the same. No error, however, could be detected, and the *croupier* rolled up the notes with an air of triumph and exultation.

“Well, and what do you think of that?” demanded

O'Sullivan of our hero, who had witnessed the whole of the circumstances we have detailed: "that is one way of getting rid of twenty thousand francs with a vengeance. By J——s, a prudent man might have played all his life upon such a capital—I wonder what his lordship will say when he finds all his money gone into the banker's pocket."

Before Delmaine could find time to reply to these several remarks, Lord C—— once more entered, and approached the table. His countenance was animated, and his whole manner denoted satisfaction.

"Well, Henry, my boy, have you doubled my capital, as you promised?" he inquired, in a tone of gayety, and in a half whisper.

"How do you like Mademoiselle Julie?" returned the youth, in the same voice, and carelessly pricking a *rouge et noir* card which he held in his hand; "is she not a fine woman?"

"Magnificent," rejoined his lordship; "but what have you done with my notes and gold, Henry?"

"Ask the croupier," was the reply. "I dare say he will show you your notes carefully spread out: as for the gold, it is long since mingled with those heaps;" and he relinquished the pin, with which he had been pricking the card, to point for an instant to the rich fund of the bank.

His lordship frowned—"Surely, Henry, you have not been so silly as to lose all my money? why, I left at least thirty thousand francs behind me!"

"You certainly did," was the careless reply, "and I did what I could to make forty thousand of them; and, but for the officiousness of that man on my left I should have accomplished it."

"How so?" inquired his lordship.

"I had staked my money on the winning colour," he resumed, "when this person must needs indirectly commend me for so doing—that was enough to make me change sides directly; I therefore threw my money on

the black and lost.—I wish," he pursued, after a short pause, "that all such officious people were at the devil."

"Amen," said his lordship, with a half sigh. "Ah, Henry," he pursued, "you are a sad wild dog, and I shall never be able to make any thing of you. But it is my own fault, since I almost knew how it would be, when I intrusted you with my seat."

"Nay," said the young man, soothingly, "you must not be angry with me—what I did was for the best. Besides," he added, "you are under an obligation to me, worth much more than all the money you have lost."

His lordship smiled, and looked any thing but displeased, but said nothing.

"I think it was a great pity," exclaimed Mr. Dart, returning once more to the attack, and addressing himself to the youth, "an exceedingly great pity, that you did not continue to follow up the red. I have picked the card, and since the *après* it has run no less than twelve times."

The knowledge of this fact only tended to increase the bitterness of feeling which the young man entertained towards our *quondam* friend, to whose interference alone was to be attributed his secession from the colour, and he resolved to mortify him.

"Then, sir, since you will compel me to speak, I must tell you that my losses have been occasioned by you alone. Had you kept your counsel to yourself I should still have continued on the red; and instead of losing upwards of twenty thousand francs, I should, at this moment, have been a winner of treble that amount."

Than this, nothing could well be more harsh; but Mr. Dart was not to be balked, while the shadow of a chance of acquaintance with a title was left; he pursued, and with a facetious, nay, a condescending grin—

"Well, but I did not advise you incorrectly, my dear sir," (here a strong movement of impatience was manifested,) "I merely observed that if I possessed ten thousand pounds, I should unhesitatingly have staked them

on the red, and you immediately removed your stake to the black."

"That, sir," replied the youth, with a certain degree of haughtiness, "was because I am not in the habit of profiting by the opinions or the advice of strangers," and he rose and sauntered to the other end of the room.

Mr. Darte looked surprised, and even coloured. He, however, speedily recovered his self-possession, and determined that the individual whom he addressed should know that he was aware of his title. "I am extremely sorry, my lord, that I should have been so unfortunate as to be in any way instrumental in occasioning the losses which your lordship has sustained; but I can only assure your lordship, that the advice which I gave was offered with the very best intention in the world."

"Sir, you are extremely polite," replied his lordship, bowing low and stiffly to this sententious address, "but I beg you will believe, that I by no means attribute the losses I have sustained to any other person but myself." Leaving Mr. Darte nearly as much petrified with his stateliness, as he had been by the impetuosity of his son, he lounged once more into the adjoining apartment, whence Delmaine and O'Sullivan soon afterwards saw him issue forth with the female already alluded to hanging on his arm, and evidently prepared for departure; thus ended this singular and edifying scene.

After pointing out several other individuals somewhat notorious in Paris, O'Sullivan finally directed the attention of our hero to one who was playing at higher stakes than those usually permitted by the table. A *reine* had been established in his favour, and not only the twenty thousand francs of Lord C—— had been transferred to him, but a much larger sum. He appeared to be known to every person in the room, yet, from his silent, cautious, reserved manner, it was easy to infer that he both hoped and wished the contrary.

"Do you know who that gentleman is?" inquired O'Sullivan.

"I do not indeed—who is he?"

"No other than Mr.* ———, our great London stock-exchange jobber."

"What!" exclaimed Clifford, with unaffected surprise; "and does an individual to whom are confided the wealth and pittance of thousands—a man enjoying the highest and most unbounded credit—risk not only his own fortune, but the fortunes of others, at the *rouge et noir*?"

"Even so," replied O'Sullivan; "but if you had lived as long in Paris, and frequented these houses as much as I have, you would not feel so much surprise on the occasion. Since the last peace these tables have been crowded with English bankers and speculators, who have visited this capital with the sole intention of play."

"But what possible motive can these men have for risking, not simply their property, but their credit, in a pursuit, the result of which is ever doubtful, when, since possessed of unbounded wealth, if speculate they must, they may do so with less uncertain prospect of success in any other manner?"

"Why does a libertine, possessed of a beautiful and amiable wife, still covet that of his neighbour?" remarked the captain; "or why does a rich miser reduce his wretched expenditure in proportion to the increase of his wealth? It is all habit, and a thirst for monopoly. In like manner, the banker, in his insatiable fondness for speculation, explores every channel for gain, and enriches himself from a hundred various sources at the same time."

"Yet, one would imagine," pursued Clifford, "that, restricted as they are in the amount of their stakes, the very small sums they must necessarily win, even when successful—and this, it may be presumed, is not always the case—must be insufficient to balance the inconve-

* More in relation to this individual may possibly appear in a second edition.

nience, not to say the injury, that must result to them, in the event of their being recognised in any of these haunts."

"The fear of recognition," said O'Sullivan, "is certainly the chief barrier to their spirit of enterprise, and that is the reason they do not frequent the London hells, where, at every moment, they are liable to meet with some individual connected with them in business, when, of course, public exposure and loss of credit, if not absolute ruin, must be the well-merited consequence. In Paris, however, they consider themselves safe, and only show themselves at intervals, 'far between,' amid scenes, to the actors in which they are, nine times out of ten, wholly unknown. Yet it frequently happens that the very mystery in which they seek to envelope themselves, by awakening observations and opinions, proves the medium of their detection, although as no one feels an interest in their identity, they are equally secure from public exposure, since they are no other than objects of simple curiosity and private speculation. As for the insufficiency of the stakes to repay the risk they incur, you are wrong in imagining them to be restricted to those of the ordinary run of players. Whenever the proprietors find an individual, possessed of high capital, willing to try his strength with them on any particular occasion, they do not object to increase the stakes; and this is decidedly in their favour, since the player cannot, in that case, by doubling or trebling his bets, recover the effects of a succession of unfortunate *coups* by one lucky hit. Therefore, while playing at even stakes, and presuming that there are as many *coups* lost as won, the *trente-et-un après* must unquestionably decide the chances to be in favour of the proprietors."

"In that case," observed our hero, who had insensibly become more interested in the unusually clear and *unnational* manner in which O'Sullivan now expressed himself, "many of these individuals must have sustained very severe losses."

"Not a few of them," continued the captain, "after having enriched the several Parisian banks with the large sums they brought with them, have been compelled suddenly to decamp, and to account as well as they could to their numerous claimants at home for defalcations, the existence of which they were unable to deny. The greater number of these, however, have been petty fund-holders and speculators. As for the individual now before you, he is a colossus in good fortune, as well as in wealth, and has for a length of time been the very terror of the bank. His visits to this side of the channel are frequent, and report says, that he has carried off vast sums, from this table especially. His stakes were originally, with the consent of the proprietors, from five hundred to a thousand pounds, a sum enormously great; and such has hitherto proved to be his success, that the house would willingly discontinue the struggle, were they not supported by the secret hope that his good fortune may eventually abandon him, and the sums he has won be once more restored to their bank."

"I can perfectly understand," remarked Clifford, "how a private individual, rich, indolent, and *désœuvré*, should feel gratification in a pursuit, which not only affords both distraction and amusement, but acts with powerful excitement on the mind; yet, I certainly am at a loss to comprehend what pleasure a man, whose ordinary speculations are of immense magnitude, and whose public credit is founded on his supposed prudence, can find in playing for a few thousands, which, even when won, cannot compensate for the disadvantages attendant on the risk of notoriety which he incurs in consequence. Do you really imagine that he conceives his person to be unknown to those around him?"

"Why," returned O'Sullivan, "I fancy he rather wishes it to appear that he deems himself a stranger here, than imagines that he actually is so. His person is too familiar to the English public, not to be known by some among the vast numbers who frequent these rooms; and even were it not so, the proprietors, to whom he is no

tranger, would, out of very pique and vexation at his acknowledged and almost invariable success, disclose his name and quality, if they perceived that he was at all anxious to conceal them. It is universally known, however, in Paris, that the great player at Frascati's is no other than the famous London capitalist, Mr. ——. Nay, although, it is not, of course, absolutely *affiché* in the public prints, still, there are hundreds of people in England of a certain class of society who are fully aware of the fact."

Here O'Sullivan was interrupted by a gentleman who drew him apart, and finally into the adjoining *roulette* room, and Clifford once more directed his observation to the subject of their recent conversation. He had followed up a zigzag of nine or ten *coups* with success, and a large quantity of notes were lying confusedly on the table before him. Here his prudence was manifest, for after having lost the two succeeding *coups*, from an apprehension that the *veine* was changing, he suddenly discontinued his play, and gathering up his scattered notes which he thrust into a side-pocket of his coat, instantly quitted the house.

"What has he won?" inquired a player, the moment after he had disappeared.

"Eighty thousand francs," replied one of the proprietors, while a sickly smile, which was reflected on the countenances of the several persons connected with the bank, marked the bitterness of his disappointment—then, as if the recollection was too painful to admit of further conversation in regard to an evil which it was now too late to remedy, he turned away, knitted his heavy brows, folded his arms, and, drooping his head upon his breast, relapsed into silence. Nor could all the remarks and opinions on the good fortune of Mr. —, which were uttered round the table, induce him to say another word.

Delmaine now sauntered towards the ball-room, and was met at the entrance by De Forsac, who took his arm, and dragged him back to the *rouge et noir* table.

"I have been looking for you every where," he said. "Well, what is your opinion of the system? is it not excellent?"

Clifford confessed that his attention had been otherwise engaged, and that he had scarcely even noticed the principle of the game.

"Here," resumed De Forsac, placing himself immediately behind a gentleman, who was playing at Louis stakes, "we shall have an excellent opportunity for examining the result."

They stood during two deals watching the progress of the game, and following the player in the division and application of his stakes. The plan appeared to be excellent, and as all the *systemites*, who had established a sort of tacit confederacy, played the same *coups*, the success was general. De Forsac scrutinized the countenance of Delmaine, and saw that he not only approved, but was eager to embark in the project.

"What a pity it is," he observed, "that you did not bring your capital with you—we should already have pocketed a large sum, for it is quite impossible to have a stronger *reine* in favour of the system than there seems to be established this evening."

"Why, I confess," said Clifford, "that it is a most excellent game; and I certainly do regret that I was prevailed on not to bring my money."

"Had you taken my advice," pursued De Forsac, "this would not have been the case. However," he added, looking keenly at our hero, whose eyes were bent at that moment on another lucky *coup*, just won by the player before him, "it is not very far to the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, and my cabriolet is below."

"But how?" inquired Delmaine, on whom this subtle hint was not lost—"how shall I account to Adeline for this sudden change in my intentions—you know I have promised most solemnly not to play to-night."

"You can easily tranquilize your conscience," rejoined De Forsac; "I will play for you."

"But if I return for the money, we shall, in all probability, have a *scène*."

"Stay," said De Forsac, his countenance animating with some sudden thought; "as you observe, it will be more advisable that you do not go, since, in all probability, your present intention will be overruled by the persuasions of Adeline. However, with me there can be no such difficulty—write a line to her, and I will be the bearer of it myself."

But too well satisfied with this arrangement, and eager to share in the advantages he saw the several players at that moment reaping, Delmaine took out his pencil and a card, and wrote as follows—

"Chère Adeline,

"Le système est si bon, si excellent, que tu me pardonneras si je le commence à l'heure même. Tu trouveras dans mon secrétaire une bourse, pleine d'or, des billets, et de l'argent—remets la entre les mains du Marquis. Je t'envoie mille baisers.

"Ton dévoué,

"CLIFFORD."

Furnished with this missive, De Forsac quitted our hero, with a promise to return as soon as possible; and throwing himself into his cabriolet, soon gained the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin. It was past midnight when he alighted.

CHAPTER V.

PROFESSING, as we do, to remove the veil which hides from public observation the actual character of those scenes which form the chief subject of our story,

it must not appear extraordinary, if we occasionally enter into disclosures, which may call forth not only the surprise, but the indignation of our readers ; yet as these facts are revealed, not with a view to pamper the vitiated appetites of the voluptuous, or to excite the imaginations of the depraved, but with the sole object of exposing and denouncing vice, we trust we shall, in these points, be considered simply as faithful historians, and unbiassed expositors of a state of infamy, with the existence of which too many of our countrymen abroad are familiar, and to which they can easily afford their attestation.

Strange and lamentable as the fact may appear—for, without further preamble, we enter on the subject—it is no less notorious, that in the French capital there are hundreds of mothers, ready and willing to barter the honour and purity of their daughters, for the mere consideration of gold. Nor is it to be imagined, that the infamous speculation is confined to the low and the vulgar, the unlettered and the unaccomplished. Women who have received good educations, and who were once high in the esteem and approbation of the virtuous, yet who have subsequently lived lives of dissipation and extravagance, until gold has become the idol of their worship, as the only means of contributing to their indulgences, and fostering their passions, and who have long since sacrificed their own charms, first to their gratifications, and lastly to their necessities, are the principal on the list. But what unfortunately tends to rob this hideous offence of much of its deformity, is the free, the open, the fascinating, the often youthful and imposing manner and appearance of these mothers, when compared with their no less fascinating and engaging offspring. If presented by age and decrepitude, we view the cup of pleasure with loathing and disgust ; but when youth and beauty administer the draught, we close our eyes against the consequences, and find it sweet indeed ; so, even the voluptuary, who would shrink from the idea of receiving a trembling victim

at the hands of mercenary age, scruples not to accept the sacrifice when emanating from a less repulsive source. Hence it arises, that the reason is often cheated, and that, in the contemplation of two forms, the one of ripened, the other of unclosing beauty, all recollection of the ties which unite them to each other is forgotten; while the senses, luxuriating in anticipation, leave no room for the exercise of the judgment, or for the operation of the more decent and acknowledged principles of our nature. Alas! how many young and wealthy Englishmen are there, who can bear witness to the fact we now assert, that the principal hotels in Paris have, within the last ten years, been absolutely besieged by mothers, anxious either to procure temporary establishments for their daughters, or to barter their charms for a certain stipulated sum. How often, too, have not we ourselves, even in the *salons d'écarté*, observed glowing and impassioned looking women, accompanied by their daughters, who, if seen alone, might have been accounted desirable; but who, now that their incipient beauties were sunk in the comparison, passed almost unnoticed in the crowd: while the whispered comments of the men, and the no less eloquent air of the women, thronging the apartments, marked them as objects of speculation on the part of their mothers—mothers who, in order to obtain the means of contributing to their own enjoyments, of feeding their own lusts, and supplying their own extravagances, have hesitated not to devote them—seldom unwilling victims—to prostitution and to infamy.

Humiliating to human nature as this picture is, it is not yet complete; and as we have had some little experience, we may be presumed to know something of the facts we disclose. It is universally known to what an extent love of dress and fondness for decoration and ornament are carried in the French capital—a rage which extends itself throughout every class, and is familiar as well to the *marmitonne*, as to the *duchesse*; but it is not so well known to what measures a great

number have recourse to support and gratify their ruling passion. Many women of a certain class, and the wives of the less opulent tradesmen in particular, are complete adepts in intrigue: and their husbands, like good natured sensible men, while they provide them with the simple necessities of life, are too prudent and too considerate to inquire how they become possessed of its luxuries. By these, we are to be understood as alluding to certain articles of dress, which they either cannot or will not afford themselves, yet in which they nevertheless like to see their better halves arrayed, and without which, in fact, a French woman would be as much at a loss, as one of the new self-created, self-styled, and self-important order of liberators, without his ribband.

Among the vast number of idle strangers, who pass their hours in lounging about the different streets, and places of public resort in Paris, there are, of course, many who occasionally view with partial eyes the gay, voluptuous, and animated *Parisiennes*, either in their *boutiques* during the day, or in the crowded *promenades* in the evening, whence after preliminary *œillades*, they contrive to follow them, and ascertain their places of abode. The next point to be considered, is the manner of effecting an interview, and in this they meet with no great difficulty. In Paris, unfortunately for the morals, or rather, probably, as a consequence of the want of morals in that metropolis, there are numerous *entremetteuses*, who act as panders to the appetites of the vicious and depraved, and who will undertake to accomplish a meeting with almost any woman of a certain class of society, whom you may choose to name. One of these worthies is therefore instantly employed, and she of course seeks to enhance the value of her own services, by urging, that the lady in question is either exceedingly virtuous, or exceedingly *farouche*, and that she will have corresponding difficulty in prevailing on her to accede to his proposals. When she has made her own bargain, which is ever such as to secure her

something in the event of failure—a result by the way, not often seriously apprehended—she sets off in quest of the desired object, and soon returns, with an account of terms, place, hour of meeting, &c. &c. It is a very particular favour, of course—the lady never did any thing of the kind before—if her husband should discover it, she must be ruined for ever—therefore Monsieur must be particularly *discret*. We pass over details—*L'affaire faite*—Madame receives the present stipulated for—a *chaîne d'or*, a *robe de dentelle*, a *chapeau paré*, or, in more extravagant cases, that *sine qua non* of a Frenchwoman's dress, *un schall de cachemire*. And thus are these things managed.

To a superior class of these women belonged Madame Dorjeville. Vain and voluptuous by nature, from the moment of her marriage with a man whom she had never loved, she had confined herself to the indulgence of her caprices in secret; but the moment she found herself released by his death from all matrimonial control, she threw off the mask, and, regardless of appearances, or the consequences such a proceeding was likely to entail on her children, almost publicly avowed her shame. This conduct naturally produced the result it merited. She was gradually shunned by that society in which the rank of Colonel Dorjeville had entitled her to move; and, exasperated at the slight thus offered her, she, like too many other women similarly circumstanced, plunged more deeply into scenes of pleasure and dissipation. The *salons d'écarté* were open to her, and here she again met with women whom she had known under very different circumstances, and who also, for their frailties, had been expelled the circles in which they were once *fêted* and caressed. By these she was received with that sort of exulting feeling with which a fallen angel may be supposed to greet the arrival of a fellow sinner in Pandemonium. At first, she felt the humiliation, but was eventually reconciled to the change, and became one of them. Yet the severest blow offered to her pride and her vanity was the difference of tone and manner

assumed by the men, many of whom she had often met in the most brilliant circles in Paris, and who had deemed themselves not a little flattered by a smile or a word. How different were they now! Polite their language was, and warm their attentions, it is true; but that respect which they had formerly observed, and which is the tribute due to virtue alone, was no longer evident in their manner, and she reflected with bitterness on the past.

On a mind like Madame Dorjeville's, however, these impressions could not long remain. Gradually she became familiar with her new position, and, plunging into dissipation, had almost lost sight of every earlier principle of virtue and good-feeling. The effects produced by strong excitation, and late hours, were not long in declaring themselves. Her person, naturally inclining to the *embonpoint*, grew heavy, and her face, otherwise pale, was covered with an eruption, and became bloated. By degrees her admirers discontinued the ardour of their attentions, and she now heard the word *amitié* too often substituted for *amour*. Can a woman be sensible of such a change, and not feel pain, and anger, and disappointment? Madame Dorjeville experienced these several emotions, and, in consequence, her temper became soured to a certain extent. Deprived of a portion of her charms, and conscious of her mental deficiencies, she now sought excitement in a passion which had hitherto been secondary; play soon became her first—her ruling desire, and night after night she passed at the *écarté* table. Few fortunes could withstand the devotedness with which she followed up this pursuit; and, in a short time, Madame Dorjeville discovered that she had squandered nearly the whole of the very limited income left her by her husband. In this crisis she had recourse to loans; but these were soon exhausted; and, in consequence of her inability to repay them, her credit was sunk. What was now to be done?—she had no resource left beyond the slight pension which had been accorded her by government, and the eager thirst for

preyed like a burning fever upon her mind. Suddenly a new light burst upon her. She saw numerous girls introduced by their mothers into these haunts beheld them courted, idolized, and desired, by the young and the wealthy of the other sex, and she observed that they eventually grew rich. Her eldest sister, Adeline, was then in a convent, where she received a superior education; she was beautiful, and now was seventeen. Madame Dorjeville felt, more than that, in her present circumstances, she no longer could afford to keep her in a public establishment, and in order to tranquilize her conscience, she made this a pretext for removing her.

Lightened at the thought of mixing in society, Adeline obeyed the summons with all the pleasure and gratification of her years. Her mother had not seen her for almost twelve months; and now that she gazed on her lovely person and fascinating countenance, she felt the power such a girl must possess over the senses of a voluptuary. By degrees she imparted her views, instilled her principles into her mind, assuring her of a strong necessity which existed for the measure, pointing out the almost certain ruin which awaited both in the event of her refusal. Adeline listened to the proposal, for the first time, with a downcast eye, a glowing cheek; but, although modest and timid, to a certain extent, in manner, she inherited all the more delicate feelings of her mother: nay, in the very convent where she had so recently issued, her mind had been developed, the germ of passion developed, and, in fact, her nature prepared for the consummation projected by her mother. And here, *par parenthèse*, we may say to those who believe our "establishments for young ladies" to be the worst of nurseries for impurity, and to those Frenchwomen, who have been educated in convents, whether there is that holiness attached to the life of the inmates, which the title of these places implies? If the question can be tolerated or warranted timidity, the answer will be, that there is not.

Prepared by her mother for the scenes in which she was about to mix, and duly enjoined to encourage the attentions of those alone who were known to be men of wealth and consideration, Adeline made her first appearance at one of those assemblies in all the éclat of novelty and beauty. As Madame Dorjeville had foreseen, she excited a strong feeling of interest, and, for a time, every tongue was loud in the praise, every eye was eloquent in its admiration, of the *belle pensionnaire*. Men of the first rank and notoriety were among her suitors, and, among others, the celebrated Russian Count W——, whose admiration of the sex could only be equalled by his princely munificence and liberality. On this nobleman Madame Dorjeville had cast an eye of preference, for she was well aware that he possessed not only the power, but, in the event of his being a successful candidate for favour, the inclination to secure such an establishment for her daughter, as could render them both, not simply independent, but, to a certain extent, affluent for life. Adeline was, therefore, desired not to suffer such an opportunity to be lost : and so assiduous were the attentions of the count, supported by the encouragement of her mother, that the rest of her admirers gradually withdrew their pretensions in despair. There was one individual, however, whom no obstacle could intimidate, and whose advances seemed to increase in proportion to the pains taken by Madame Dorjeville to check them—one who had breathed the subtle language of voluptuousness into the ear of the young girl—who had awakened, from their most secret recesses, the warm energies of passion, and who, by means of the poison of his sophistry, had already succeeded in creating an interest in her breast.

Among the number of fashionable men whom Madame Dorjeville had formerly known in the world, and whom she now met in the new society in which she had been introduced, was the Marquis de Forsac. At the period of her marriage, this nobleman, then the Comte de Forsac, was considered the handsomest and most ac-

complished young man of the day, and being an intimate friend of her husband's, he was, at that period, almost a constant visiter at their house. To a woman ardent and voluptuous, as we have already described Madame Dorjeville to have been, such a character as De Forsac could not fail to be dangerous. Report had whispered something of an intimacy between them, and a consequent rupture of the young comte with his friend, but as there was nothing to support the vague rumours of the moment, the story eventually died away; it was, however, certain, whatever the cause might have been, that De Forsac, from that moment, ceased to be on those terms of intimacy with Colonel Dorjeville, which he had previously enjoyed, and his hasty departure to join the French army in Spain had given rise to various conjectures on the subject.

Yet, whatever might have been the character of their former intimacy, when Madame Dorjeville and De Forsac met for the first time in the *salons d'écarté*, it was with the ease and freedom of friendship, and without any appearances, on either side, which could have warranted the presumption of previous illicit familiarity. The marquis, however, was too much a man of the world, not to feel desirous of preserving the interest he had once excited, even when every vestige of passion on his own side was extinct: for experience told him, that the partiality even of a woman who could command no reciprocal feeling, was not to be slighted, since it might at some future moment be rendered subservient to his purpose. To Madame Dorjeville he evinced the same manner that he was wont to display towards the many women who were well known to have formerly worn his chains, but who had long since given place to some new object of his ever-varying caprice. One discovery of importance Madame Dorjeville had recently made—and that was, that the fortune of De Forsac, which, at the period of their first acquaintance, had been splendid, was now nearly exhausted; and she had too much penetration not to perceive that he was often compelled

to have recourse to his "ways and means" for supplies. It was not, therefore, without consternation, that, on the introduction of Adeline to these gay and dissipated scenes, she beheld her singled out by the being who least among the throng could realize the golden dreams in which she had been previously indulging. She knew the dangerous powers of pleasing which De Forsac possessed, for notwithstanding years had robbed him of his freshness, his person was still highly prepossessing; and his mind, matured by time, experience, and a deeper knowledge of the human heart, had that strong energy, that fascinating ascendancy, which, when prostituted to purposes of vice, while it enlists the senses in its behalf, is sure to establish undivided power over its victim. She recollected, moreover, what she had felt when the language of passion first met her ear, and believing Adeline to have inherited all the ardour of her own nature, she was at no loss to understand the effect which the burning words of the wily De Forsac would produce on her senses. To keep him at a distance, therefore, now became her first and principal object; but this she soon found to be a vain attempt. De Forsac saw her aim, and smiled scornfully and in derision. His will seemed to be excited by opposition, and whenever he found an opportunity of breathing the poison of his principles into her ear, the heaving bosom and highly flushed cheek of the young girl, marked the secret pleasure and infatuation with which she listened to his discourse. So glowing was his language, so vivid the colouring of the pictures which he drew, that she would have deemed the fascination sweet, even from the lips of age and deformity; but when she turned and saw his brilliant eyes fixed on hers with more than human fire, and when she beheld his fine features flushed with the very ardour of his own descriptions, she trembled, and confessed the power which his soul possessed over hers.

It was in vain, therefore, that the intriguing Madame Dorjeville sought to baffle the adventurous projects of De Forsac. Every artifice to which she had recourse

was defeated ; and as she perceived that Adeline felt all the influence of his spells, she was even compelled to give up her opposition in despair. Into this tacit acquiescence she was moreover led by the sudden departure of Count W——, who, however, previously to his quitting Paris, had presented Adeline with a set of jewels—those, indeed, which, on a later occasion, she had offered to Clifford, when beset by embarrassments. The field was now open to De Forsac, whose reputation for success with women was too notorious to admit of rivalry from any other quarter—so that Madame Dorjeville had the mortification to perceive, that many wealthy men, who would otherwise have become suitors, were, in consequence of his pertinacity, thrown completely beyond the action of her speculative views. In yielding to the solicitations of the marquis, however, she did not altogether overlook considerations of prudence and self-interest. Five thousand francs was the amount stipulated for herself, while an equal sum, to be disposed of as she thought most conducive to her future use, was to be the portion of Adeline. This was a large sum for the already needy De Forsac ; but his passion supplying him with expedients, and calling forth all the resources of his brain, he finally succeeded in procuring the money ; these were the ten thousand francs alluded to by Pierre Godot, by whom they had been advanced, under the solemn assurance given him by De Forsac, that he was about to marry an Englishwoman possessed of immense wealth, when double the amount was to be repaid. The bills which he had given for this sum, he had the address to make payable only after his marriage, and as the old miser had implicitly believed that such an event was to take place immediately, he had not hesitated to subscribe to the terms. We have already seen how he failed to remunerate the money-lender, whose distress at the defalcation had been cruelly heightened by the consciousness that he had no legal claim against him, while he continued unmarried.

Recovering from the first delusion of passion, Adeline

soon discovered the folly of the step she had been induced to take. Young, sanguine, full of tenderness and warm feeling, she had listened to the glowing language of De Forsac until her senses had become interested, while she believed him to be the ardent and devoted being he had represented himself, capable of strong attachment and generous sentiment. The novelty of possession once over, he threw off the mask, and showed himself in his true colours—selfish, sensual, and depraved. Nor was it long before a new object of pursuit drew his attention almost wholly from herself. Adeline then perceived that her imagination alone had been seduced into passion. Her heart was free; and now that she was satisfied that De Forsac had simply made an impression on her senses, and not on her affections—that his burning words alone had influenced her choice—she rather rejoiced in the change than otherwise, and experienced a feeling of indifference equal to his own. This was enough to alarm the self-love of the vain and inconstant marquis. No sooner did he discover that Adeline had ceased to entertain any thing like regard or passion for him, than, renewing his assiduities, he sought once more to establish his power over her. But it was now too late. The charm was dissolved; every effort on his part was vain: and while she yet accorded him the intimacy of friendship, he found that every attempt at a renewal of passion was firmly withheld. Other admirers followed, but turning away in disgust from the hacknied proposals which met her ear on every hand, she discouraged every approach to intimacy. Madame Dorjeville stormed, raved, threatened, supplicated, argued, and insisted, in turn, but nothing could induce Adeline to waver in her determination. Not, it will be believed, that this self-denial arose from principle, since what possible principle could be preserved by a young girl issuing with a heated imagination, from the confinement of a convent, into scenes so gay, so dissipated, yet so artfully covered with the veil of propriety, as those we have described? It is true that her passions

were ardent ; but Adeline felt that to interest her passions it was necessary first to interest her affections ; and having been disappointed in the only individual for whom she had ever felt a preference, she had little inclination to enter on a second *liaison* of the kind. As for the past, she consoled herself for what had taken place by the reflection that she had acted more in compliance with her mother's wishes than with her own inclinations, and this gave her very little trouble or concern. But although she withstood every new temptation, her passions were still deep and unsubdued ; and at the period when Delmaine first beheld her on the Boulevard, the natural gayety of her disposition had been for some time succeeded by an air of languor and melancholy, arising wholly out of the very warmth and isolation of her feelings.

That a young, and even virtuous female, glowing with feeling, and of ardent imagination, should have been forcibly struck by the manly beauty of Delmaine, is a circumstance by no means surprising. How much more powerfully, therefore, must that preference have been entertained by one, who had been taught to consider the gratification of her passions as a point that was only to be rendered subservient to her interests, and who, having once overstepped the barrier of virtue, found no moral check to the wild play of each passionate impulse. From the moment Adeline first encountered the gaze of Delmaine, on the day of the funeral, she conceived a passion for him, and she at once felt that he alone was the being for whom she could entertain all that devotedness of affection of which she well knew herself to be capable. Hers was not, however, the bold, the intrusive, and confident love of the experienced in pleasure, and the confirmed in indulgence ; it was rather the timid, the shrinking, the sensitive affection of the novice, with this difference, indeed, that her distrust grew not out of ignorance, but out of knowledge, and that her diffidence was a result, not of vague and ill-understood impressions, but of the reality of experience

and conviction. During the early part of that day, she had endeavoured, by her lively sallies, and apparent carelessness of manner, to deceive the penetrating observation of De Forsac, who, however, but too plainly discovered the state of her feelings, while he did not fail to show the pique he entertained in consequence.

Another motive contributed to the anxiety she felt to conceal her preference. She had remarked the intimacy of manner subsisting between Miss Stanley and our hero, and perceiving the former to be a young and lovely woman, she immediately conjectured that they were lovers, and was at once sensible of the little probability there existed of her ever meeting him otherwise than casually and in public. What, then, was her delight, when on recovering from the state of terror and insensibility into which she had been thrown by her accident, she found herself reclining on the breast of him, of whom her ardent imagination was already full. Almost electrified at the thought, she felt the blood rush violently through her frame, and she could not refrain from that pressure of the hand, which, almost contrary to her expectation, was answered by our hero. On her return home, her mind, her heart, and her imagination, were all devoted to the recollection of what had passed. The person of Clifford was the *beau idéal* of all she had ever pictured to herself in the seclusion of her conventual life. The fine contour of his form, and the animated expression of his features, she fancied bespoke that warm intelligence of soul in which she had been wont to deck the object of her imagination's worship, and which, however warped her principles by the pernicious influence of example, her education and her understanding enabled her sufficiently to appreciate. Adeline knew, from painful experience, how little reliance could be placed on mere appearances; but there was a candour, an openness, and an enthusiasm of expression, in the countenance of the young Englishman, which commanded her confidence, and she felt that he alone could ever influence her destiny. Little did she then imagine

that ere long their fates were, in a certain degree, to be united, and *that* through the instrumentality of the last being in the world by whom it was likely such a result could ever have been produced.

We have already seen what were the plans formed, even on that morning, by De Forsac, in regard to Miss Stanley, and we have followed him from the moment of his acquaintance with Clifford and his friends, to that of the introduction of the former to Adeline, at Astelli's; but we have not yet entered into all the views of the scheming marquis, in seeking to promote this intimacy.

It was a day or two subsequent to that on which his acquaintance with the Stanleys was formed, that he called on Adeline Dorjeville. He found her exceedingly pale, and occupied in sketching a head which she left carelessly lying on the table, when she rose to receive him. De Forsac, with the true exclusiveness of selfishness, could not endure that any woman whom he had loved, should ever feel a *voluntary* preference for another, and his jealousy was often carried to the most ridiculous and offensive pitch. Snatching the paper, therefore, from the table, he examined the unfinished work, and turned pale with rage and disappointment, on recognising the features of Delmaine, which were strikingly delineated; yet, this circumstance, notwithstanding all the annoyance he experienced in consequence, he was glad to discover, since it satisfied him of her passion for our hero, a passion which he fully intended to make subservient to his own interests. He could not, however, refrain from giving vent to the mortification which rankled at his heart, and throwing himself violently into a seat, he began to use all the invective his wounded self-love could suggest, accusing the whole sex of inconstancy, caprice, duplicity, and a host of other failings, until he had completely exhausted his bile. At length, after a long struggle between his interest and his pride, and perceiving that Adeline was in no way affected by his observations, he inquired, but in

a voice broken by anger, and with an implied disdain for our hero,

"And are you really so very fond of this person?"

Adeline made no answer.

"What shall be my reward," he continued, "provided I introduce him to you?"

Adeline instantly changed her air of indifference for one of extreme interest. She fixed her eyes upon him for a moment, with an expression of incredulity, and shook her head.

"*Ecoutez*," he exclaimed, gradually acquiring more resolution to enter on the subject. "Provided," he pursued, after a pause, "you enter into *my* plans, I am willing to forward *yours*. I know this Englishman, and have it in my power to introduce him to you whenever I please."

A sudden glow crimsoned the pale cheek of Adeline, and she breathed more audibly; her eyes sparkled with animation, and she eagerly demanded, "Can it be so?"

Again the lip of De Forsac quivered. "You seem to take a most flattering and unusual interest in this stranger," he observed, with one of his bitter sneers.

Adeline made no reply, for she felt the impolicy of provoking his jealousy at that moment.

"When did you see him last?" he pursued, in the same strain.

"I have not seen him since the day of the funeral."

"And yet," continued the marquis, taking the sketch from the fire-place, into which he had previously thrown it, and holding it up between his finger and thumb, as if there were pollution in the touch, "you appear to have given a singularly faithful outline of his features, considering you have seen them but once: nay even *then*, under circumstances of extreme terror and emotion;" and he fixed his penetrating eye on hers with an expression of doubt.

"You know that he saved my life," she remarked,

soothingly, for she dreaded lest she should offend, and consequently induce him to change his purpose.

"Quite like a hero of romance," sneered De Forsac : "and you, I suppose, who have been in the habit of solacing your dull hours in that old convent, with reading tales of chivalry, and hair-breadth escapes and dangers, like a true heroine, cannot do less than reward this silly Englishman with your most especial favour!"

"Is this all you have to say to me?" inquired Adeline, with affected indifference, and rising.

"Stop a moment," said De Forsac, catching her by the folds of her dress, as she was about to retire, and compelling her to resume her seat, "I have already told you, that provided you choose to enter into my plans, I will introduce you to him without delay."

"I will—what are they?" she eagerly rejoined.

"You saw the young Englishwoman who stood at the window with him on that day?"

"Yes," said Adeline—"what of her?"

"Your *cher Anglais* then is her lover." He looked steadfastly at her, and saw her change colour.

"However," he pursued, "if you will do your utmost to detach him from her, I think I can answer for the result. If you have your designs on the gentleman, I also have mine on the lady."

"Pray explain yourself; I do not clearly comprehend your meaning."

"Listen to me," said De Forsac, drawing his seat nearer to hers. "At the very moment when you first conceived a *fantaisie* for this Englishman, I also entertained a sentiment of passion for his charming companion, and was resolved to be introduced to her if possible. I succeeded, and already have I contrived to render myself a favourite with the whole party, not even excepting your *preux chevalier*, who little dreams of the service I intend him. I am not ignorant of what passed between you on the Boulevard, and it is evident that he has not beheld you with indifference, for only last night I artfully questioned him on the subject ;

he has warm passions, and is, I am persuaded, full of vanity and self-love. Nay, you need not smile so incredulously—I repeat that he is full of vanity, and that is the auxiliary on which I chiefly rely for the furtherance of my plans. I will introduce him to you, and you must employ every art on your part, while I endeavour to effect a rupture between him and his friends. Above all, in the event of an intimacy, you must make it a point to appear as much in public with him as possible—in no other way can you detach him from the Englishwoman.”

Adeline hesitated. “But why,” she at length demanded, after a pause of a few moments, “must a rupture with his friends be the result of his acquaintance with me? As to artifice, it is unnecessary—I shall require no affectation of feeling to testify the nature of the regard I entertain for him.”

“And do you really think me such a fool,” rejoined De Forsac, with bitterness, “as to introduce you to a rival, unless I had some object to gain by it myself? Do you imagine, either that after the avowal of preference with which you have just insulted me, I would not seek to do him all the injury possible, even without an object of my own to accomplish? Determine, therefore, at once; for if you refuse, I can easily find others, who will be but too happy to aid me in my plans. Do you consent or not?”

“I do,” said Adeline: “I promise to do all that I can to forward your views, provided you will but introduce him to me immediately.”

“Good,” exclaimed De Forsac, in a more soothing tone; “but this is not all. He is rich, generous, ardent, and may be easily induced to play”—he paused to observe if she comprehended his meaning.

“I do not understand you,” she at length remarked.

De Forsac hesitated, and seemed annoyed.

“You will have great influence over his actions,” he finally pursued, “and a few thousand francs trans-

ferred from his pockets to our own, cannot possibly insure him materially."

"Never," cried Adeline, indignantly, and with an energy that startled the wily marquis; "never will I lend myself to any thing half so base or so infamous; never will I be instrumental in effecting the ruin of the man whom I profess to love. I had hoped at first," she added, "that I had not perfectly understood you, but now I perceive that your meaning was too evident."

"Well, never mind," observed De Forsac, with affected indifference, yet secretly troubled at the proud air of contempt with which she rejected the proposal, "we will talk of that another time. Am I to understand, however, that you subscribe to my first proposition?"

"I have given you my promise," was the reply.

"When does Astelli's *grande soirée* take place? some night this week, is it not?"

"To-morrow night."

"Well, to-morrow night, if possible, I will introduce him to you. Do you make it a point to call this morning, and ask Astelli to send a card to the following address in the Rue de Richelieu:" and wrote the name of our hero on a slip of paper. Then drawing the rough draft of the note which had contributed so powerfully to fix the wavering purpose of Delmaine on that eventful day, he gave it to her to copy, and forward to his own hotel by the *petite poste*. Having thus gained his point, by securing an ally whose fascination could most contribute to his success, he unceremoniously withdrew, in order to see Clifford, and mature his plans of infamy.

We have already seen how faithfully the projects of the intriguing De Forsac succeeded, and how complete, at length, became the ascendancy of Adeline over our hero. Yet was her happiness not unembittered by the reflections arising from the duplicity into which she had been forced. She really loved Delmaine with sincere and disinterested affection, and the idea that a knowledge of her conduct would have a tendency to banish

all feeling of interest and tenderness from his heart, often oppressed her spirits, even unto melancholy. It was usually under the influence of such impressions that she indulged in those frequent bursts of despondency which gave so much pain to our hero. Another cause contributed to produce them : now that she really felt the sentiment of tender and disinterested attachment in all its fulness, she became more alive to the opinion Clifford must form of her, in the event of a discovery of her former *liaison* with the marquis ; and she trembled at every moment, lest some untoward circumstance should lead to a disclosure. It is true that she felt she could not, in strict justice, be held accountable for her actions anterior to the period of her acquaintance with Clifford ; yet she could not endure the thought of being despised, and, perhaps, rejected by him, for whom alone her heart had ever throbbed with the true fervour of attachment. It was this feeling that had prompted her, at Madame Bourdeaux's, to caution our hero against an acquaintance with the superb stranger, whom she well knew to be her determined enemy, and but too ready to do her all the injury in her power. Several times in the course of their intimacy she was on the point of disclosing the past events of her life ; but invariably found herself checked, not simply by the manner of her lover, but by the dread she entertained of forfeiting all claim to his esteem. So necessary had his affection become to her, that she felt it impossible to live without it ; and thus was her mind torn and agitated by the conflicting feelings by which she was assailed. She had, moreover, the mortification to perceive, that vague and indefinable suspicions of the past frequently arose in the mind of our hero, which she, alas ! was but too sensible of her inability to remove ; yet so wounded, so conscience-stricken had she been, during the last hasty meeting between De Forsac and Clifford, that she had made up her mind, even before the departure of the former, to a full disclosure. But when the impetuous feelings of her lover broke forth on that occasion, as if in anticipation

of what was to ensue, her courage forsook her, and she once more, and too timidly, relapsed into silence.

Whatever were the failings of this unhappy girl, she had been guilty of no wrong towards Delmaine beyond that of concealment. She had made his interests her study, and instead of leaguings with the unprincipled De Forsac, who had often latterly renewed the proposal which had originally been met by her with the most decided hostility and contempt, she had endeavoured, by every argument and remonstrance she could command, to wean him from the destructive course of life he was so blindly pursuing. This she did, too, notwithstanding the repeated and unmanly threats of De Forsac to expose her to her lover; and her firm opposition and disregard of consequences arose, in this instance, as much out of principle as affection. Alas, poor Adeline! she is no fictitious character—she has lived, and she has suffered: had the generous impulses of her warm heart been directed into a proper channel by the maternal hand, a fate far different might have been hers. But let us not anticipate:

CHAPTER VI.

THE hour which succeeded to the departure of Delmaine had been passed by Adeline in bitter reflection, and her spirits were weighed down by the cruel apprehensions which no effort could banish from her imagination. At length, unable to endure this state of depression, she rang for her *femme de chambre*. But the silly *bavardage* of the loquacious waiting-woman, instead of relieving, only increased the irritation of her feelings. Dismissing her, therefore, with an injunction not to sit up for Clifford, she drew the sofa near the fire.

and with a beating heart continued to count the minutes, until he might be expected to return. He had promised not to be later than twelve, and that hour was fast approaching. With each revolution of the second hand of the *pendule*, which stood on the mantle-piece before her, the palpitation of her heart became more violent: and when at length the hour struck, without bringing with it the object whose presence she awaited with the most intense agitation of mind, each vibration fell on her heart like a funeral knell. The very silence which reigned throughout the apartment contributed to her sickness of soul, and she almost gasped for breath. Taking a *carafon* from a liqueur stand, which had been left on the table, she poured out a glass of cordial, and swallowed it with eagerness; but this, in her already excited state, only increased the delirium of her feelings, and acted like fire upon her brain. At length, when wound up to the highest pitch of mental excitation, and almost despairing of his return, she fancied she re-heard a slight tap at the door of the *antichambre*—she listened attentively; and as she suspended her breath, her heart throbbed as if it would have bounded through her bosom. She was not deceived; the knock was repeated, and in the next minute succeeded by a pull at the bell.

"*Dieu merci!*" she exclaimed, and a mountain seemed to be removed from her breast, as she rushed into the ante-room and unfastened the door. "*Oh, mon ami,*" she pursued, throwing her arms around the figure that appeared at the entrance, "*que n'ai-je souffert depuis votre départ! Je craignais que vous ne seriez jamais de retour!*"

No answer was given, but she felt herself pressed violently in return. In her hurry she had neglected taking a light, and the *antichambre* was too dark to enable her to distinguish more than the outline of objects within.

"Speak," she exclaimed fearfully, and alarmed at the silence of the figure, from whose embrace she now

endeavoured to extricate herself; "Are you not Delmaine?"

"Not Delmaine," muttered a voice, half in pique, half in desire, "but one who, at such a moment, may prove as fond, and who may as deeply appreciate the happiness." As these words fell on the ears of the young girl, a hand was passed in wantonness over the rich contour of her now unconfined and shrinking person.

Adeline instantly recognised the voice to be De Forsac's. Terrified at his manner, and indignant at his presumption, she made a violent effort to disengage herself from his arms.

"Nay," said De Forsac, sneeringly, and releasing her at the same moment, "there can be no necessity for all this struggling; surely we understand each other better than to play the fool in this manner."

Adeline made no reply, but hastening to regain her apartment, sought to close the door. The attempt, however, was vain. The marquis, who had closely followed her, placed his foot against it, and with a violent thrust succeeded in opening it.

"*Monsieur De Forsac*," she at length exclaimed, with warmth, and summoning all her dignity, "*quittez cet appartement sur-le-champ, ou je vais sonner les domestiques.*"

"Will you?" said the marquis, smiling bitterly, and closing the door after him as he entered. "In order to prevent that, suppose we deprive you of the power." A pair of scissors were lying on the mantle-piece, near which the bell rope was suspended. He took them up, and, raising himself to his full height, cut the ribband asunder. "Now," he pursued, throwing the part he had severed towards her, "you may ring as long as you please."

Adeline became exceedingly terrified at his manner, which was now more deliberate and determined than she had ever known it to be. Trembling violently, she threw herself upon the sofa and wept.

"Quite a Niobé in tears," he continued, sarcastically, and with evident exultation in her grief. "There was a time," he pursued, "when, if I mistake not, I used to be welcomed with smiles and passion instead of these. But *n'importe*, whether in smiles or in tears, you are always an object of desire." And he seated himself near her on the *canapé*.

"Monsieur De Forsac," exclaimed Adeline, starting from her seat, yet scarcely able to stand, from excess of emotion, "I insist on your retiring instantly." Then, with a view of terrifying him into compliance, for she well knew the real cowardice of his nature, "I expect Mr. Delmaine every moment, and you may rely upon it your appearance, at this unseasonable hour, will not pass unnoticed by him."

De Forsac ground his teeth with rage, and his eyes flashed fire. "Damn Mr. Delmaine!" he vociferated. "If you knew how much I hate him, you would never dare to repeat his name to me. Thrice cursed be the hour when I first introduced him to you."

Adeline shuddered.

"But," pursued the marquis, once more altering his tone of anger to that of sarcasm, "suppose I should announce myself as a messenger from him; suppose I should be the bearer of an *order* from your *Seigneur et Maître* to his obsequious *slave*." He took the card from his pocket, and handed it to her.

Adeline read the hurried scrawl, threw it down with a movement of bitter disappointment, leaned her head on her hand against the mantle-piece, and wept even more bitterly than before.

De Forsac's bosom was torn with rage and hatred, and the only consolation he derived at that moment was from her sufferings.

"Well," he at length demanded, "do you intend to comply with this order, of which *I* am the bearer?" and his look and accent denoted that his own interest alone had induced him to play the part of a messenger to one whom he so bitterly disliked.

"This is all your work," returned Adeline. "It is you who have counselled him to adopt this measure. How mean, how pitiful must you be, thus to plan the ruin and destruction of the man whom you call your friend!"

"Friend!" repeated De Forsac, furiously, "I never was his friend; from the moment I first beheld him I hated him, and never more than to-day. Do you think I have forgotten, or ever can forget, the insult offered to me this very morning, and in this very room? Do you imagine I ever can be weak enough to forgive him the humiliation I have endured? Was I not compelled by his violence of manner, to give the lie to my own feelings—to humble my pride into the very dust? Hear me!" he pursued, scornfully, perceiving that she turned away with disgust and contempt from his avowal. "You know me well—you are aware that I possess none of those ridiculous feelings which the world are pleased to misname courage, virtue, honour. You have long since learned that I am not such a romantic fool as to prefer a bullet through the head, to the free, the entire, the undisturbed gratification of my passions, because some silly love-sick rival, neglected and despised by those whom I condescend to notice, may fancy himself aggrieved, and grow weary of existence. Of all these sentiments you are aware, for you have known me in intimacy, and I also know that for these, you, like a romantic fool, despise me.—But," he continued with increasing acrimony, "my hold is not upon your love, but upon your fears, and provided I possess you, I care not whether it be in love or in fear."

There was something fearful in the energy with which he pronounced these last words. Adeline breathed with difficulty, but when he at length rose from the *canapé*, and threw his arm round her waist, she made a sudden movement to gain her dressing-room, and called aloud for her *femme de chambre*.

"Silence," muttered De Forsac, shaking her violently. "you may call till doomsday, and not be heard ;

your woman is in the porter's lodge below, where I have desired her to wait until my return. Moreover, you need not alarm yourself; at present, I want but the money for which I came—where is it?"

In the expectation that she should thereby be freed from his presence, Adeline sprang towards the *secrétaire*, and unlocking a secret drawer, drew forth the purse to which Clifford had alluded in his note, and handed it over to the marquis. "And now let me entreat you to leave me this instant." Perceiving, however, that he felt no disposition to move, "Surely," she pursued, "your absence will be remarked; Delmaine will feel surprised at this unnecessary delay, and, in all probability, he will return in search of you, and ascertain the cause."

In the struggle which she had made to extricate herself from his arms, her cap had fallen off, and her long and redundant curls hung in wild profusion over her flushed cheek. Her night dress, moreover, was disordered, and her whole appearance was well calculated to provoke the desires of the voluptuous marquis, in whom, however, a sudden revolution of manner was now operated.

"Adeline," he murmured, in one of those soft tones which he so well knew how to assume, and which contrasted singularly with his recent vehemence, "hear me for one moment, and I shall obey you—listen to what I have to communicate, and if you then wish it, I shall no longer importune you with my presence." Then, taking her hand, while his gaze was bent upon her with all the intenseness and dimness of passion, he rather dragged, than conducted her to the ottoman.

"Adeline," he pursued, in the same soft tones, "forgive me for what I have said; attribute all my expressions to the wild disorder of my feelings, and believe that the declaration of my hate was untrue. Hate you, oh no! who could be so monstrous, so insensible, as to hate one possessed of such matchless and seducing beauty!" He paused, and a convulsive shudder attested

the disorder of his frame. "Fool that I was," he continued, "to reject the happiness I possessed—yet hear my apology. When I first knew you, you were young and inexperienced; a child in person, and a novice in passion; your charms were then scarcely developed, and your imagination was in its infancy. Oh, had I then beheld you as I do now, ripe, womanly, glowing with feeling, and of exquisitely matured beauty, I should have loved and cherished you with my soul's deepest intenseness—have loved you even as I do now. Can you wonder, then, if I hate this Englishman? can you feel surprised that I should detest the being who has succeeded me in your affection—the man who is nightly pillowed on your bosom, and who possesses undivided empire over those charms?" And as he spoke, he clasped her passionately to his breast, in spite of every effort on her part to prevent it.

"Once more," he proceeded, relinquishing his embrace, yet forcibly detaining her on the ottoman, "I see, by your ill-concealed disgust, that you love me not; but no matter: I ask not your love, I desire not your exclusive possession. If you will, let all the tenderness of your soul be reserved for another, but let me——" He paused, but his wild glance told all the libertine purpose of his soul, better even than words could declare it.

"Cursed be the hour when you first acquired the right to insult me with such disgusting language," exclaimed Adeline, with indignant energy. She attempted to rise, but De Forsac held her fast, and she burst into tears.

"One word more, and I have done," he pursued. "You know the object I had in view in introducing Delmaine to you. It has succeeded; I am a favoured suitor with the lady, and every obstacle is now removed. Her fortune is large, and you know it will be with me altogether a marriage of convenience. Six thousand francs shall be your income for life. Will you then consent to be mine on these terms, or not? Recollect,"

he pursued, reading the most unqualified disgust in her countenance and manner, "recollect that Delmaine is in disgrace with his friends, and nearly ruined already."

"Then, if he is ruined, his ruin will I share with him," exclaimed Adeline, with emotion. "Alas! if ruin and disgrace await him, what has he to thank for it, but your villany, and my weakness?"

"His you may still continue to be, if such is your infatuation; but why his alone?" rejoined the marquis; "if you really love him, Adeline, you will study his interests. Recollect the bills that are in the hands of Pierre Godot—a word from me may render him an inmate of Sainte Pélagie to-morrow."

"*Monstre!*" she exclaimed, with energy, and wiping away her tears, "never will I hold communion in future with such a wretch. Nay," she pursued, as he smiled in bitterness and derision, "you need not look so confident in your power over me; this very night will I disclose every circumstance connected with our intimacy. Rather will I confide in his generosity, than in your forbearance. Rather will I run the risk of being degraded, despised, and rejected by him, than be compelled to endure your hateful presence after this night. Recollect, too, on your part," she continued, with a haughtiness of manner which the marquis had never before seen her assume, "that if he is threatened with a prison, he will know to whom he is indebted for it, and you must answer to him for the result. But," she concluded, with a scornful expression, "I know your base nature too well, to entertain any apprehension on that head."

De Forsac appeared thunderstruck. At any other moment, he would have felt his soul chilled, his purpose defeated by the boldness and firmness of the language thus addressed to him; but he had gazed on the beauty of Adeline until his mind had been worked into a state of delirium, and he had lingered over the pictures which his vivid imagination rapidly and successively drew,

until he had forgotten even his prudence and his fears. All the tumultuous passions of hate, rage, and desire, now assailed his soul; and, throwing off the mask of supplication and tenderness, he once more avowed his actual feelings. "Fool!" he exclaimed, with bitter sarcasm, "did you imagine I could ever so far forget myself, or change my nature, as to feel contrition for any thing I had ever previously felt, or said, or done? No: I sought but to win you by fair and soothing words to my present purpose—to make your senses participate in the intoxication of mine; but, after all, I know not whether such exciting beauty is not best compelled to its own happiness. Now, then, in spite of your *boy* Delmaine, and hell itself, once more you shall be mine."

Adeline sprang from the ottoman, and sought refuge in her dressing-room, but before she could succeed in closing the door, the now highly excited De Forsac had thrust himself into the opening. Her bed-room was beyond, and in the obscurity which reigned throughout, she fancied she might escape. The marquis followed, and was only directed in his pursuit, by the loud beating of her heart. He advanced to the spot, where she stood trembling and dismayed at his audacity. Adeline shrieked aloud, and her voice echoed throughout the suite of apartments; but, reckless of consequences, intent only on the accomplishment of his object, the violator caught her in his wild embrace: he imprinted his burning lips on hers, and his hand wandered even more unrestrainedly than before over the beauties which madened him.

"*Oh! mon Dieu!*" exclaimed the terrified, and fainting Adeline; "*que deviendrai-je?*" and wearied with her unavailing efforts, her limbs grew powerless, and her hands relaxed their hold. Encouraged by her exhaustion, De Forsac now grew more enterprising; his passions seemed to have no bounds to their impetuosity, and he at length exclaimed triumphantly,

"*Qu'il vienne maintenant votre maudit Anglais!*"

Scarcely had he uttered these words, when steps were heard on the stairs; he listened attentively—he was not deceived, for immediately afterwards, the door of the *antichambre*, which he had neglected to fasten, was pushed violently open, and footsteps were heard advancing rapidly through the salon. De Forsac now relinquished his victim, and sought to conceal himself; but scarcely had he moved from the spot, when a light from the dressing-room flashed through the inner apartment, and in the next instant, in the person of a man bearing a light, who now stood before him with a pale cheek, a quivering lip, and flashing eye, he recognised Delmaine.

The cowardly soul of the marquis now sunk within him, for in the concentrated passion of our hero, he foresaw some fearful termination to the scene. He felt that it was impossible to palliate his offence, since the whole disorder of his appearance attested too forcibly against him. Alarmed at the very silence of Clifford, whose eye glanced rapidly, and alternately, from Adeline to himself, he perceived the necessity for saying something. With a desperate and almost hopeless attempt at calmness and assurance, he therefore sought to treat the circumstance with levity, and he observed, although in a voice broken by fear,

“ You see what it is, Delmaine, to expose a man of the world like myself, to such temptation, at such an hour.”

“ Villain! scoundrel!” burst in almost sepulchral tones from the agitated breast of our hero, while he grasped the trembling marquis firmly by the throat, and shook him furiously. “ How dare you address me by that familiar appellation? Wretch,” he pursued, with increasing huskiness of voice, “ I have more than once suspected you of being a contemptible villain, and now that I have such evidence of the fact, I know not what prevents me from dashing your brains out against that wall.”

The terrified De Forsac struggled to release himself,

but in vain ; his throat was compressed as within a vice. Moreover, what are the efforts of a man, detected in his villany, and quailing at the very thought of the punishment he has merited, compared with those of him, who, mailed in justice and in right, holds the strong arm of vengeance over his devoted head ?

"Miscreant," pursued Clifford, "your safety lies in your very baseness ; it were unworthy a man of honour to sully himself with the punishment of a reptile half so miserable," and he relaxed the firmness of his grasp.

"Mr. Delnaine," stammered De Forsac, as soon as he could recover breath enough to speak—"this is not the way to proceed. If I have injured you, I am at least willing to afford you redress in a gentlemanly manner. Nay, sir, I shall insist on your atoning to me for this insult : your blood alone can wash out this stain, and I expect that you will meet me to-morrow."

"Meet you to-morrow ! By hell, say you so," muttered Clifford through his clenched teeth, once more resuming his pressure of De Forsac's throat, in very pleasure at the intimation of his intention ; "meet you—yes, will I meet you ; I feared your dastard spirit would not have dared so much ; but lest you should change your mind, there shall be no provocation wanting."

His right hand still grasped the light with which he had entered, and with the left he now dragged the wretched De Forsac along the *parquet*, who, ignorant of his purpose, stretched forth his arms, and called on Adeline for assistance. The passion of Delnaine had endowed him with a lion's strength, and the struggling form of the marquis followed him in his progress through the apartments like that of a young child. As they issued from the dressing-room to the salon, De Forsac made a final effort to extricate himself, and he caught at the handle of the door for support.

"Release your hold instantly, sir, or, by Heavens——" He paused, De Forsac marked the furious expression of his eye, and instantly obeyed. Still dragging the now almost powerless frame of the marquis

after him, he at length gained the door of the *antichambre*, leading to the landing-place. This he opened, and pausing for a moment on the threshold, "Villain, marquis, or whatever you are," he at length hoarsely whispered, "I shall expect to hear from you to-morrow in the Rue de Richelieu. Recollect, sir, that I give you but four-and-twenty hours to prepare yourself; if you fail then, by the Heaven I worship, you shall be punished as you best merit;" and as he concluded, with a last powerful effort, he flung his trembling victim violently against the opposite wall of the landing-place, then closing the door, he returned for a moment to the scene he had just quitted, where Adeline still lay, pale, dishevelled, and scarcely conscious of existence.

At his entrance, however, she started from the attitude of desolation she had assumed, threw back her disordered hair with both hands, and exclaiming with wildness of manner—"Oh, Dieu! *est-il parti?*" attempted to throw herself into his arms.

"*Femme, ne me touchez pas!*" thundered Clifford, throwing her rudely from him. Adeline staggered a few paces, a loud and heavy sigh burst from her labouring bosom, she pressed her right hand tightly on her heart, and sunk motionless on the *parquet*.

The feelings of humanity were not wholly dead in the breast of Delmaine: he raised her from the floor and placed her upon the bed, shuddering, despite of himself, as he felt that he now pressed her form for the last time.

"Oh, my God! my God!" she exclaimed, while her heart seemed ready to burst with the violence of its throbbing, "what have I done to deserve this?"

"What have you done to deserve this?" repeated Clifford, in a low, hoarse tone, while he stood leaning over her, with his arms folded, and a countenance pale as the hue of death. "Recall the events of the last half hour, and then ask what you have done to deserve it."

"Oh, speak to me in any tones but these," she cried.

"Vent all your unjust anger upon me in violence and in hatred if you will, but do not address me, I conjure you, in that deep and almost superhuman voice. Oh, Clifford," she pursued, bursting into a violent paroxysm of tears, "I am not the guilty being you imagine me to be."

"Unjust anger! not the guilty being I imagine you to be!" eagerly repeated Delmaine, to whom indignation at her duplicity had now restored the loud and more natural tones of anger, "do you pretend to add mockery to insult? Have you the effrontery to deny that you are the servile paramour of that infamous De Forsac?"

The agitation of Adeline increased with every moment. "Alas," she faltered, "how true was the presentiment of evil I entertained this morning. Had you but listened to my warning voice, this never would have happened. *Ah, malheureuse! malheureuse! que je suis!*"

"Your presentiment of evil," returned Clifford, with bitter irony, "was only a vague dread of the consequence of the meeting which you had planned with De Forsac for this evening. Tell me," he pursued, grasping her hand with violence, "was it not arranged between you that he should find a pretext for calling during my absence?"

"Oh! no, no, no!" almost screamed Adeline. "If there is any being on earth whom I loathe, it is the Marquis De Forsac."

"'Tis false!" thundered Delmaine; "but answer me—do you pretend to say that De Forsac is not your paramour? that you have not mutually leagued to deceive me? Speak, woman!"

"*Je te le jure sur mon âme,*" aspirated the exhausted Adeline, in a voice scarcely audible.

"*Quel mensonge infâme!* One word more," he pursued, "were you never the mistress of De Forsac?"

The most convulsive sobs burst from the bosom of the unhappy girl, but she replied not.

"Answer me," he repeated, with even greater vehemence than before, "and answer me truly; did you never live with him?"

"I did," faintly articulated Adeline.

"Ha! by Heaven! do you confess it?" he thundered: "yet, I know it all, I know that I have been your mutual dupe; but your reign is now over, and as for him—*adieu, pour jamais.*"

"Clifford, Clifford, *ne me quittez pas ainsi,*" shrieked the unhappy Adeline. Summoning all her remaining strength into one final effort, she sprang from the bed, and attempted to follow, but her head grew dizzy, and her limbs with difficulty supported her; she succeeded, however, in groping her way to the entrance of the salon, but here she found the door locked on the outside, when, overcome with the host of feelings that oppressed her heart, she sank lifeless on the floor.

Delmaine heard her fall, and, he found it necessary to summon all his resolution not to relent, or swerve from his purpose. His first impression had been to depart without seeing the perfidious woman who had so cruelly deceived him; but a latent feeling of weakness—a desire to behold, for the last time, one to whom he had really been tenderly attached, and, possibly, a certain degree of curiosity to know how she would endure his presence under the consciousness of detection: these several considerations had induced him to alter his intention, and he now bitterly repented it.

On his way through the salon, his eye was attracted by the glittering beads of the purse which De Forsac, in his eagerness to pursue Adeline, had carelessly thrown on the table, with the intention of resuming it at his departure. He took it up, opened it, and removing a note of a thousand francs, approached the *secrétaire*, and enclosed it in a blank envelope, folded in the form of a letter, which he simply addressed, "Mademoiselle

Dorjeville." This done, he closed the *secrétaire*, and finally quitted the room.

On reaching the landing-place, he heard a confused sound of voices below, and by the quick motion of lights passing to and fro, he immediately conjectured that something unusual had occurred. Groping his way down in the dark, for the hall lamp had gone out, he soon gained the porter's lodge, where a number of persons were collected round an individual who had received a severe contusion on his forehead, which the porter's wife was busily engaged in bathing. The wounded man was De Forsac.

"*Comment as-tu été assez bête, Joseph, pour laisser éteindre la lampe,*" said the good-natured woman, "*tu vois ce que Monsieur le Marquis a souffert en conséquence.*"

"*Dame!*" rejoined the Cerberus, gruffly, "*il est une heure passée, et tu sais bien que je l'éteigne toujours à minuit.*"

"*Oui, mais tu-as bien su qu'il y avait encore du monde en haut—ainsi c'est bien de ta faute.*"

Among the number of persons assembled in and without the small loge, both *locataires* and *domestiques*, was Fanchon, Adeline's *femme de chambre*. As soon as she perceived Delmaine, she ran up to him, with a doleful countenance, exclaiming, "*Oh, mon Dieu! Monsieur—savez-vous que Monsieur le Marquis vient de se donner une blessure grave. A ce qu'il nous a dit, son pied a glissé, et il est tombé tout le long d'un escalier.*"

From these observations, Clifford at once understood that he had been the author of the *blessure* in question, which De Forsac, in order to conceal his shame and mortification, had had presence of mind sufficient to attribute to accident.

"What the devil is it to me, if he had broken his neck?" he remarked, much to the surprise of the *femme de chambre*, who had always considered them the best friends in the world. "But, Fanchon, go up instant-

fy to your mistress. She is exceedingly unwell, and wishes to see you immediately."

"*Mais, Monsieur ne va pas sortir?*" she asked, observing that he pursued his way towards the *porte-cochère*, after the promptly answered, "*cordons, s'il vous plaît.*"

"*Ne vous occupez pas de moi—mais montez à l'instant,*" was the abrupt reply.

"*Qu'il est peu aimable ce soir—c'est absolument nos Anglais,*" muttered Fanchon, as she hastened to see what was the matter with her mistress, for whom she felt an attachment, by no means uncommon to Frenchwomen of her class.

It was nearly two o'clock when Delmaine sallied forth into the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, and long before that hour, the hotels in Paris are generally closed to all but their inmates. Anxious to secure a resting place for the night, he repaired to his old lodgings in the Rue de Richelieu; but after knocking loudly and fruitlessly at the *porte-cochère* for ten minutes, he was compelled, at last, to abandon all hope of arousing the sluggish porter, who seemed as if he slept the sleep of death. He tried two others in the same street, but although he succeeded in awaking the inmates, he was equally disappointed in his attempt at admission. At the first, he was gruffly told that their beds were engaged, and the gate was closed in his face by the shivering *portier*, who had answered to the summons, literally *en chemise, et en bonnet de nuit*. At the second, they were rather more civil, and perceiving that the applicant was a foreigner, inquired if Monsieur was provided with his *passeport*, when, upon being answered in the negative, they declared that it was out of their power to receive him, as a regulation of the police prohibited all hotel-keepers from receiving strangers, even for a night, unless they produced their passports, and had their names inscribed on the books. Annoyed and disappointed at his failure, Clifford now pursued his course, until he found himself in the Rue St. Honoré, near the Théâtre Français. It had been his intention, on leaving the last hotel, to make

a final effort to procure admission at Meurice's; but in his abstracted state of mind he passed the house, and had gained the Place Vendôme, before he was sensible of his mistake. He now resolved to try some of the hotels in the Rue de la Paix. As he approached the *corps-de-garde* of the *sapeurs-pompiers*, he was abruptly accosted with a shrill "*qui vive?*" from the sentinel on duty.

"*La France!*" he replied, and continued to advance along the foot pavement.

"*Passe au large,*" rejoined the soldier, sternly, and bringing his musquet, with a clattering sound, to the position of the charge.

Somewhat recalled to himself, by this interruption to his reverie, he obeyed the order of the sentinel, making a semicircular *détour* along the street to regain the pavement, at a distance of a few yards beyond the post, and now found himself opposite to the Hôtel Mirabeau, which adjoined the *corps-de-garde*. He looked up, and as he reflected, that within its walls lay, even at that moment, reposing in the arms of pure and undisturbed slumber, one whose affection and friendship he had, by his conduct, forfeited for ever, a feeling of the bitterest desolation came over his heart. Summoning all his firmness, however, and experiencing a sort of sullen satisfaction in the belief that fate had directed all her arrows at his heart, he, at length, succeeded in repressing the emotion to which this feeling had given rise. He even felt a savage pleasure in being refused admittance at the only hotel in the street, where he now made a final application, although the night was exceedingly cold, and the sharp air whistled through the leafless branches of the trees on the Boulevard, along which he now pursued his careless course, with the intention of lingering in the neighbourhood until the hour of unclosing the hotels in the morning. In a few minutes he encountered a *guet* of the *garde nationale* performing their customary rounds.

"*Qui va là ?*" sharply demanded the *sous-officier* in command, at the same time halting his party.

"*Ami !*" replied Clifford, and he continued his sauntering and mechanical course.

The bourgeois-soldier looked back suspiciously at him for a moment, then turning to his party—" *Qui diable est celui-là ?*" he asked, facetiously.

"*Je crois que c'est un Anglais,*" replied one of his men ; then, with a low laugh, that was echoed in a sort of grunt by his *camarades*, "*il a bien l'air d'un pauvre diable qui vient d'être flambé dans les maisons de jeu.*"

"*Mu foi, tu as raison, Dubourg—ce ne peut être qu'un Anglais ruiné qui trouvera du plaisir à se promener seul sur le Boulevard dans un pareil froid à deux heures du matin,*" and he drew the collar of his *carrique* more closely round his ears.

"*Ce sont des blancs-becs que ces Anglais,*" observed another of the *guet* ; "*ils ne savent que faire pour dépenser leur argent jusqu'au moment où ils se-trouvent sans le sou. On dit que la Sainte Pélagie en est rempli.*"

"*Oui, Chartreux, ils peuvent être sans six sous mais pas sans souci,*" observed a squeaking voice, repeating, as something original, a play upon words nearly as old as the proverbs of Job.

"*Courage, mon petit bossu,*" exclaimed the commander of the party, encouragingly, and giving the last touch to the adjustment of his *carrique*, "*tu as de l'esprit, mon garçon, et tu seras fait caporal un de ces jours. Mais allons, la garde—en avant.*"

The patrol now continued their course ; and Delmaine, who would have made no opposition to his detention in the *corps-de-garde* for the remainder of the night, was suffered to pursue his own unmolested, when he suddenly found himself opposite to Astelli's in the Rue de Grammont. The rooms were illuminated, and sounds of revelry were distinctly to be heard in the silence which reigned every where around. With what faintness of interest did they now fall on his sick and oppressed spirit ; for, alas, what a change had taken place in

his feelings and his pursuits—what a revolution had been operated in his condition, since the night when he was first introduced into that gay temple of dissipation and pleasure !

Nearly exhausted with fatigue and benumbed with cold, he seated himself on a low post at the opposite angle of the street ; but aware of the ridicule he must excite, if seen and recognised in this situation, he resolved to enter and wear away the night in play. The *portecochère* was open, and the drowsy porter, overcome with the fatigue and lateness of the orgies on which he attended, lay extended at his full length, in an enormous old-fashioned *fauteuil*, and was buried in sleep, while his right hand firmly and mechanically grasped the *cordon* of the door which he had opened for some departing visiter, but had not had the power to reclose. Ascending the broad and still brilliantly lighted flight of steps, conducting to the apartments, Clifford at length found himself at the well-remembered door of the *antichambre*. Here he rang the bell, which was instantly answered by a servant from within, splendidly attired, who, at his desire, placed a seat before the large wood fire that was blazing on the hearth, and brought him a goblet of wine, which he emptied at a draught. In a minute or two afterwards, Madame Astelli, whose curiosity had been excited in regard to this unusually late visiter, entered from the apartments, and on recognising our hero, testified the most sincere satisfaction at his presence, declaring that she felt it an age since she had seen him last : she expressed a hope that he intended to be more frequent in his visits in future. To all her compliments, and to her inquiries after Adeline in particular, he answered with a sickness of heart, a heaviness of spirit, which he had the utmost difficulty in concealing.

After swallowing another goblet of wine to relieve the dryness of his throat, he was at length persuaded to accompany his hostess into the *écarté* rooms, where, in consequence of the ball at Frascati's, a very limited number were assembled. Here he was again compelled

to submit to the same ordeal, for, as his connexion with Adeline was almost universally known in these houses, and as he usually made it a practice to accompany her, his appearance at any moment without her, of course excited curiosity and surprise, and naturally led to conjecture and inquiry.

The sudden action of the fire on his almost iced limbs, together with the quantity of wine he had taken, in his exhausted state of mind and body, soon produced effects, which were manifested by a forced and unnatural gayety, reflected in his flushed cheek and sparkling eye, which did not escape the notice of several of the party.

Among the principal players was the Commandant P——, to whom we have alluded in the former volume—a keen, shrewd, penetrating, and designing Marseillois, who, with no other income than a small pension derived from government for his military services, contrived to procure the means of living in affluence by preying on the several dupes he constantly met with at the *écarté* tables. Not satisfied, however, with the profits arising from these, the commandant had established a *peccao* table in his own private apartments, which were situated in the Rue Louvois, and overlooking the site of the theatre where the unfortunate Duc de Berri was assassinated. This house had been for some time an object of jealousy with the proprietors of the licensed gaming houses, and was now under the close *surveillance* of the police, who had several times attempted to force open the doors. The cautious and well-timed arrangements of the commandant, had however, baffled all their vigilance, and night after night he was in the habit of decoying young men to his rooms, where they were invariably plundered by himself and a set of *chevaliers d'industrie*, with whom he was leagued. To this individual Clifford had, in the onset of his career of dissipation, been introduced by De Forsac, who had expected to reap no little profit from the connexion; but notwithstanding all the advances of the artful Marseillois, and the inducements held forth by the marquis, the natural

distance and haughtiness of his character, aided by the watchfulness and prudent admonitions of Adeline, had hitherto preserved him from the snares which had been prepared for him.

From the unusual excitation and unsteadiness of our hero, the wily and observant commandant at once inferred that the moment for striking a final blow was at length arrived. It was evident that the Englishman was totally unconscious of his game, for he played and betted without skill or judgment, neither, while he remarked this circumstance, did the contents of Clifford's well-filled purse escape the vigilance of his hawk-like eye. A look of intelligence was exchanged between himself and several of his confederates who were present, and, in a short time, after having dispossessed him of about three thousand francs of his money, it was announced by Madame Astelli, with apparent reluctance, that she would feel obliged by their giving over play for the night. Vexed at this intimation, and in that peculiar state of mind which makes one feel the loss of a sum of money with impatience and bitterness, without being able to account for the feeling, Delmaine rose abruptly from the table, and repairing to the *antichambre*, again called for a full goblet of wine, which he emptied with avidity. Here he was soon after accosted by the commandant, who, with his well-organized party, now prepared to depart.

"*Je suis désolé, Monsieur,*" said the former, whose gigantic person, enveloped in a cloak of proportionate dimensions, while his enormous whiskers and moustache, were alone visible above the capacious collar, bore no slight resemblance to that of a brigand—" *je suis désolé de ce que la Fortune vous ait été contraire ce soir, mais si vous voulez bien me faire l'honneur d'accompagner ces Messieurs chez moi, j'aurai beaucoup de plaisir à vous donner votre revanche.*"

We have already observed that Clifford was visibly affected by the wine he had taken; and when we add to this circumstance the desire he had entertained to re-

gain the money he had lost, and the necessity he was for securing some sort of an asylum until the morning together with the temporary abstraction under which he laboured in regard to the earlier occurrences of the evening, the inconsistency of his acceptance of this invitation will in some measure be explained. The commandant turned round to his friends, smiling triumphantly at the success of his plans, and they all set forth for his *baraque*, as he termed his place of abode.

Arrived at the Place Louvois, the Marseillois took his key from his coat pocket, and cautiously unlocked the private door. Not a glimmering of light or sound in description was distinguishable throughout the long narrow passage, or the flight of stairs by which it terminated; neither was there a sound to be heard but the save their footsteps, and the low, rough whisper of their host, directing them to tread as gently as possible in order that the inmates of the several apartments which they passed in their ascent might not be disturbed by the noise. On reaching the fourth landing place the commandant tapped lightly at the door of an apartment *chambre*, which, in the next minute, was opened in silence for their admission. This room was enveloped in darkness; but as the door at the opposite extremity was opened, a sudden burst of light flashed upon them, dazzling their eyes with its brilliancy. Here a fairy scene of enchantment was unfolded to their view. The apartments, the shutters of which were hermetically closed, were small, but neat, and furnished with utmost luxury and elegance. In the first of the suite of rooms through which they passed, a supper table was covered with *volailles* and *pâtés* of every description, with a proportionate supply of exquisite wines, tastefully laid out; the second and principal, a round table with a variety of fancifully disposed lamps, flanked the *pecao* table; while the third and last, which was a sort of boudoir, filled with exotics, and covered with glowing prints, the subjects of which were some of the most voluptuous stories of Heathen mythology.

contained one or two *écarté* tables. At the further extremity of this little boudoir stood a French bed, covered with yellow satin drapery, the folds of which, gracefully festooned, were reflected in a large plate glass of singular size and beauty, near which it was placed. This, it was evident, was the *lit de repos* of a very elegant and splendidly-attired female, who did the honours of the house, and had all the appearance of being at home. Two or three men, who had arrived before the commandant and his party, were at the moment engaged in a game at *écarté* in this little temple of taste, and it was remarkable that not a single domestic was visible during the night.

It would be tedious and superfluous to follow our hero through the several events of the night. Suffice it to say, that, after having been deeply engaged at the vile game of *pecuo* upwards of two hours, in the course of which he was repeatedly plied with wine by the lady, whose encouraging smiles and attentions increased as he became more adventurous in his play, he at length was reduced to his last stake of twenty Louis, which he had placed on a card in opposition to the commandant who held the bank. Before the latter, however, had finished deciding the *coup*, a violent knocking was heard at the street door, and in the next instant, the portentous and alarming summons, "*Ouvrez, au nom du Roi !*"

"*Grand Dieu, c'est la Police !*" exclaimed the startled Marseillois, dropping the cards, and pocketing his winnings, which lay before him.

"*Eteignez les lumières !*" shrieked the female, setting the example herself.

In the next instant they were all once more in total darkness; and in the attempt to hide themselves, the utmost confusion prevailed. Clifford placed his hand upon the spot where he had the moment before staked his money, but with the exception of a couple of Louis that had escaped the rapacious grasp of some "person or persons unknown," it was all gone. Somewhat so-

bered by the general alarm, he cursed himself for having been decoyed into what he now, not very unjustly imagined to be a den of thieves, and sought to effect his escape. Snatching the first hat on which he could lay his hand, he succeeded in gaining the landing-place, but not before he had overturned the supper table, and all its contents, in his flight. The crash produced by the falling bottles, dishes, &c. sounded fearfully throughout the whole building, and was echoed even from below ; while the rough voice of the commandant was raised in cursings at the awkwardness of the unknown offender. Never was there a scene of more confusion and dismay produced by the same causes. Groping his way down the stairs, at the hazard of breaking his neck at every step, Clifford now succeeded in gaining the first floor. At this moment the street door gave way beneath the efforts of those without, and hurried steps along the passage were now distinctly audible.

" *Montez, montez vite,*" said a voice, and presently several men rushed with all the speed the darkness would admit of up the first flight of stairs. Delmaine had presence of mind sufficient to place himself in the recess of a door in the landing place, where he continued immovable, holding his breath until they had passed. Theirs he felt warm on his cheek as they ascended, and one even touched him as he brushed hastily by. Lingerer for a moment to make his escape more secure, he heard a door open on the third floor, and in the next instant a light flashed along the stairs.

" *Mon Dieu ! qu'y a-t-il ?*" exclaimed a voice, which our hero at once conjectured to proceed from some individual, who, alarmed at the *fracas*, had issued forth from his warm bed to ascertain the cause.

" *Donnez-moi votre lumière,*" rejoined a second voice, in a tone of authority, and gradually the light and the sounds of footsteps diminished, as the party advanced into the apartments of the commandant.

Fancying that he could now effect his retreat in safety,

Clifford once more groped his way along the passage to the front of the house. The door was wide open, and bore evident marks of the violence of the assailants. Congratulating himself on having pursued a mode of escape, which, of all others, would, to any man in his senses, have appeared the least feasible, and in which accident alone had befriended him, he again pursued his course towards the Rue De Richelieu. The day was just beginning to dawn, and when, harassed, sick, and fatigued with the events of the last twelve hours, he reached the hotel, the porter was in the act of opening the gates. This man had often experienced the liberality of our hero, and his sense of obligation could not in any way have been more satisfactorily testified at that moment, than by the *empressement* which he showed to procure him the bed he so much required.

CHAPTER VII.

WITH what eagerness, when labouring under the influence of depression, and when writhing beneath some cruel and unexpected affliction, does the harassed mind seek to lose sight of its miseries in the lethargy of sleep, as if each moment of the oblivion to which it is anxiously and voluntarily consigned, tended to deaden the stings of anguish, which, sooner or later, must necessarily succeed to this coveted state of slothful insensibility. Who, then, has not wished to sleep on for ever? Who, at those moments, has not diligently sought to exclude the faintest rays of a consciousness, which brings with it but desolation and despair to the soul? Who, under these impressions, has not felt, while shrinking from the fearful realities which are dimly seen through the Lethean mists of the mind, that a state of

the most perfect apathy is far preferable to the empire of reflection, and the return of memory.

When Delmaine awoke, at a late hour in the afternoon, the events of the preceding night burst upon his recollection in all the bitterness of painful reality. Never had he so keenly experienced that utter sickness and isolation of the heart which springs from the conviction that the last stay of existence has been rudely snapped asunder, and for ever. In order to banish these reflections, he endeavoured to force his senses into that state of stupor which we have just described; and in this object he partially succeeded, for his perception and feelings became blunted; and though his imagination still embraced the several causes of the desolation which oppressed his soul, they were seen, like the early rays of an autumnal sun, through mist and obscurity. But this state of apathy and torpor could not last for ever, and Clifford at length effectually awoke to all the misery of his position. His feverish thoughts now wandered from one subject to another, without daring to linger on any; and when in particular he reflected on the disunion which had been effected between himself and his once kind and affectionate uncle, his self-reproach was bitter in the extreme. "And yet," he murmured to himself, "she for whom I have forfeited all this has cruelly deceived me!" From Adeline his thoughts naturally recurred to De Forsac; and in a moment the tone of his feelings was changed, as he dwelt on the humiliating circumstances of his connexion with that nobleman. The chill of despondency at once forsook his heart, and he felt his whole frame glow with indignation and desire of vengeance. This, indeed, was the only consolation left him; and, in his present state of mind, he longed for the arrival of the moment when one or both should be hurled into eternity. The feeling which he had, on a former occasion, entertained for De Hillier, was one of mercy, compared with his present impressions; and he could not deny to himself, that to see the despicable and unprincipled De

Forsat, weltering in his blood at his feet, would afford him, not only satisfaction, but delight. And in this intense feeling of hatred he fancied himself sufficiently justified.

When De Forsat left him on the preceeding night for the Rue d'Antin, Clifford had sauntered into the dancing room, where half a dozen couples were at the moment whirling round in the figure of the waltz. As it was a masked ball, a majority of the women wore that disguise, and of the number of those now dancing, not one had her features uncovered. But, although the *blonde* and the *brunette* were only to be distinguished from each other by the colour of their hair, the same levelling disguise extended not to their forms, which were habited in close black dominos, adapted to, and marking the outline of their figures. Of these one was particularly remarkable, not only for the elegance of her movements, but for the rich and yielding symmetry of her person; and Delmaine fancied that the figure was familiar to him. In the course of the dance, the mask approached the spot where he stood, negligently reclining against one of the folding-doors, and he thought he heard his name pronounced, but amid the noise and din of the place it was impossible to decide with certainty. Still, however, he continued to keep his eyes riveted on the figure. Again it drew near, and a *mouchoir brodé* was raised to the lips of the unknown, and then gracefully wafted towards him. Clifford felt the blood rush into his cheeks, and he became exceedingly anxious to know who she possibly could be. Again the waltzers went round, and as the object of his curiosity approached, the mask suddenly fell from her face and disclosed the features of the superb stranger whom he had seen at Madame Bordeaux's. Her partner stooped to pick up the fallen disguise, and she instantly availed herself of that opportunity to dart one of those singular and significant glances at our hero, which we have already described, and which were so well calculated to excite disorder in his senses. She then re-

ceived her mask, took the arm of her cavalier, and moved towards a distant part of the room, where she seated herself on an ottoman at the side of a lady, with whom she knew our hero was partially acquainted. As soon as the waltz was terminated, he moved in the same direction, and after addressing a few compliments to Madame Duval, seated himself on the other side. The stranger who had resumed her mask, now whispered something in the ear of her friend, who immediately rejoined, in a tone of voice of peculiar signification—

"Monsieur, voici un beau masque qui meurt d'envie de faire votre connaissance."

"Madame me fait trop d'honneur," said Clifford, rising and bowing.

"Oh Dieu! quelle politesse, et envers un masque surtout," exclaimed Madame Duval; *"ma foi, il me semble que je suis déjà de trop ici,"* and she rose and sauntered towards a distant group.

A silence of a minute succeeded. *"Il y a longtemps, Monsieur, depuis que je n'ai eu le plaisir de vous voir,"* at length observed the mask, in a low deep voice, and encouraged by her disguise to make the first approaches to intimacy.

"Puis-je donc me flatter, Madame, que le temps vous a paru long?" said Clifford, with earnestness.

A sigh was the only answer.

"Pour moi," he pursued, *"je n'ai fait que penser à vous, et je craignais ne vous revoir plus."*

"Voulez-vous faire un tour de promenade?" said the stranger, languidly, as she removed her mask, and discovered her beautiful features, flushed with the rich glow of emotion, while her large dark eyes were half hid beneath their fringes.

"Volontiers," returned our hero, fixing his impassioned gaze upon her fine countenance.

"Mais pourquoi me regardez-vous de cette manière? savez-vous que vous jetez le trouble dans mes sens?" and her eyes sank beneath his in apparent confusion.

Clifford answered not, but she could perceive that he

trembled, and that his cheek paled with emotion ; they now rose, and sauntered through the rooms.

" *Quelle chaleur étouffante il fait ici,*" remarked the stranger ; "*je voudrais bien prendre l'air dans le jardin.*"

They now issued from the apartments into the covered walk, which, as every visitor at Frascati's must well recollect, overlooks the Boulevard, with which it runs parallel the whole extent of the garden. Arrived at the small *bosquet*, by which it is terminated, the mask complained of heat and fatigue, and threw herself on one of the benches—Clifford placed himself at her side. They had not, however, been seated five minutes, when, after having drawn her shawl closely around her, the stranger pleaded the freshness of the air as an excuse for approaching nearer to her companion, suffering her soft white hand at the same time to be detained in his.

The time, the place, and the opportunity, were tempting. Delmaine was sensible that any declaration of his feelings must be unnecessary, as the eyes of both had already spoken volumes. He felt her warm breath upon his cheek, and even in the dim light of the place he saw her bosom heave with agitation—he pressed the hand he held, in significance and in silence—the pressure was returned, and followed by a shuddering of the whole person. At that moment a light from a window on the opposite Boulevard was reflected throughout the *bosquet*. Delmaine raised his eyes to those of his companion : they were dimmed with passion—Wild with his feelings he now encircled her waist with his arm, and strained her convulsively to his heart ; the head of the stranger dropped on his shoulder, and she breathed heavily and loudly—the lips of Delmaine approached hers—they met, and in the fulness of his intoxication, he murmured, utterly unconscious of his error, "*Chère, chère Adeline, reçois mon âme.*"

The effects of the lightning are not more rapidly developed than was the change operated in the stranger at these words. She started from his embrace, as from that

of a viper, and her glance of voluptuousness was exchanged for one of haughtiness and fire. Clifford was at once sensible of the error he had committed ; but as it was impossible to explain, without rendering matters even worse than they were, he continued silent.

In the next instant, however, the mask became perfectly composed, betraying neither the fervour of passion, nor the excitement of anger. Delmaine was surprised at the self-possession she evinced, but still more so, when she observed in a tone of *plaisanterie*, as they quitted the *bosquet*—

" Nous allons faire une sottise, mais grâce à votre amour pour la petite Dorjeville, nous nous sommes échappés du danger."

Our hero of course felt silly, and from the sarcasm of her manner, it was evident to him that he must appear equally so in the eyes of his companion. He still continued silent.

After an interval of a few minutes, she inquired, with an air of indifference, and as if simply with a view to change the conversation, "when he had seen De Forsac last?"

Clifford explained the nature of their appointment for the evening, and the mission on which the marquis had set forth.

" Se peut-il donc qu'il soit allé seul faire cette commission?" she inquired, attaching importance to the question only by the tone in which it was asked.

" Oui," said Delmaine, somewhat startled at her mysterious manner, *" il est allé seul. Pourquoi me faites-vous cette question?"*

" Ma foi, je ne sais pas," with assumed carelessness, *" c'étoit une question de hasard."*

But the hesitation and embarrassment of her manner, satisfied Delmaine that it was not a mere idle and insignificant question, and he only became more pressing in his desire to know what she meant.

" Mais, mon cher Monsieur, ce n'est rien du tout," she at length replied, as if unwilling to yield to his en-

treaties for an explanation. "*Cependant*," she pursued, perceiving that he was at last willing to believe that she actually did mean nothing, while her voice assumed a tone of deep interest; "*Y a-t-il de la prudence d'envoyer un homme du monde, comme votre ami De Forsac, à cette heure chez une jeune femme, qu'en aime? En outre, vous connaissez le proverbe Français, 'On revient toujours à ses premiers amours,'*" a proverb, by the way, which she was fond of using on every occasion.

"*Que voulez-vous dire, Madame?*" demanded Clifford, eagerly, and stopping suddenly short his promenade, while all his former suspicions rushed with tenfold violence on his mind.

Could he at that moment have beheld the countenance which, ten minutes before, had beamed on his in all the fulness and abandonment of passion, he would have been startled at the difference of expression which it now assumed; it wore that of triumph and malignity.

"*Assurément vous plaisantez*," she pursued, in the same soft tone she had adopted from the commencement of this disclosure; "*vous ne pouvez ignorer la liaison qu'existait autrefois entre votre ami De Forsac et Adeline Dorjeville?*" and she dwelt with emphasis on the word "*ami*."

"Good God!" exclaimed Clifford, in agony, to himself, "can this possibly be? *Continuez, Madame*," he pursued.

"*Tout le monde le sait*," resumed the stranger; and then, with well-affected astonishment, "*est il donc possible que De Forsac ne vous ait jamais parlé de son intimité avec elle? Il a été son amant pendant un an.*"

The heart of Delmaine sank within him in bitterness of shame and humiliation. "What an infernal fool to have been the dupe of such a scoundrel!" he muttered between his half-closed teeth, and as he recollected that even at that moment the infamous marquis was beneath the same roof with his paramour; he abruptly tore himself from his companion, and hurrying through the

suite of rooms with the impatience of a madman, soon gained the court-yard of the building. Several *cabriolets de place* were in waiting; into one of these he threw himself, and desiring the coachman to drive *ventre à terre*, remained for a moment absorbed in the wild and tumultuous feelings excited by the disclosure of the artful and disappointed Frenchwoman.

In this haughty and singular character, we presume our readers will have no difficulty in recognising the female with whom De Forsac renewed his acquaintance at the Feydeau, after the departure of Colonel Stanley and his party. On that occasion, and subsequently, at Madame Bourdeaux's, she had been struck with the peculiar elegance of manner, and with the handsome features of our hero. As for any sentiment of tenderness or affection, it was not in her nature to conceive it; for, although possessed of powerful passions, she was proud, vain, selfish, and vindictive in the extreme. Accustomed to the homage which was universally paid to her striking and commanding beauty, she seldom forgave any apparent slight on the part of those whom she deigned to honour with her notice, and it was not without a feeling of strong resentment against Delmaine, that she perceived the night to wear away without his making his appearance at Frascati's, as he had promised. The disappointment she entertained, in consequence, was bitter, and she at once attributed it to his greater love for one whom she already hated, for having, on a former occasion, been the innocent means of detaching the wealthy Russian Count W—— from the train of her admirers, an offence which, however unintentional, she could never forgive. Still her passion for Delmaine increased, and she frequented those houses where he was in the habit of presenting himself. By some singular *contre-temps*, however, it happened, that until the present evening they had never attended the same *soirées* at the same moment, and thus her plans had been entirely defeated. On the present occasion, she was resolved that no opportunity should be trifled

with on her side, and she most unquestionably had made the first advances to our hero. The scene in the *bosquet* had been ingeniously prepared by herself, and there she certainly awaited the realization of the dream she had been so long indulging. But, though strong her passion, her self-love was stronger, and the wound inflicted on her pride, by the involuntary and misinterpreted exclamation of Delmaine, had, in an instant, chased every vestige of desire from her mind. She felt the unconscious tribute which his lips preferred, as an insult of the last nature to herself, and, in lieu of the love which she would have unhesitatingly tendered a moment before, she now resolved to inflict sting for sting. That our hero was not aware of any previous intimacy having subsisted between Adeline Dorjeville and De Forsac, she had been informed by the latter; and, although, in the coolness of her calculation, she foresaw that the disclosure must inevitably embroil the marquis, with whom she was even now on terms of intimacy, with the man who believed him to be his friend, this consideration was of minor importance with her. It was sufficient that Delmaine had, to a certain extent, slighted her, and she was resolved that his heart and his pride should suffer for it, even though fifty De Forsac's were the victims of her vengeance.

During his rapid drive to the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, a thousand recollections crowded on the mind of our hero; each confirmatory of the fact that had just been disclosed to him. The circumstance of his introduction to Adeline by De Forsac—the hesitation and confusion evinced by her when asked for her glasses for the money-lender, and the subsequent declaration of the old miser, that they were the same he had previously sold to De Forsac, by whom they had been intended as a present for some young girl, of whom he was passionately fond—these, and a variety of other incidents, to which he had paid no previous attention, proved, beyond a possibility of doubt, that a *liaison* had existed between them; and when, also, he recalled the conduct

of De Forsac that morning, the deep expression of anger and disapprobation which he had detected in his manner towards Adeline, and the cavalier tone he had subsequently assumed in speaking of her—when, too, he reverted to the tears she had shed, and the agitation she had betrayed, he was moreover convinced that that *liaison* still existed, and that he was the dupe, the silly and contemptible dupe, of two of the veriest wretches in the creation. But while every act, word, and look, of the unhappy Adeline, was now carefully remembered and marshalled, in evidence against her, Clifford utterly lost sight of the counterbalancing traits in her character. He forgot that she had constantly sought, by every means in her power, to wean him from the course of folly and extravagance, into which he had so determinedly rushed: that she had frequently by her admonition, prevented him from becoming the dupe of adventurers, and that, in the hour of necessity and trouble, she had been anxious to make the sacrifice of her trinkets, the last dependence she possessed, in order to free him from his embarrassments. We are wrong, however, in saying that he forgot these things—they were remembered, but remembered only to appear as additional evidence against her, and her conduct was now attributed to the most selfish of motives. He believed that she had only dissuaded him from play and extravagance, in order that she might reap the fruit of his abstinence herself—that her admonitions against adventurers had only been intended to lull him into more perfect security, in order that, in conjunction with De Forsac, she might better exercise her own powers of deception, and that the offer of her trinkets had been made merely to display a generosity which she never felt, and under the firm conviction that they never would be accepted. Thus ungenerously did Delmaine distort the very virtues of Adeline into vices—but in this, it must be confessed, he only followed the example of his fellow men. How seldom, alas, does it happen that, in the hour of disappointment, and when discovering the existence of

one positive injury, in regard to ourselves, we fail to attribute every pre-existing benefit to motives of selfishness and interest ; but too happy in the admission of the belief, since we, thereby, relieve our consciences from a weight of obligation, and contrive to persuade ourselves that a mountain of previous debt is cancelled by one single fault, whether of omission or of commission.

Our hero, moreover, with that facility which arises from unwillingness to admit the existence of error on our own side, while we readily ascribe a more than merited portion to our neighbour, seemed to have utterly lost sight of the flagrant injury meditated against Adeline by himself, and that at a moment when he had not the slightest reason to doubt her exclusive regard and affection for him. Neither did he consider that that very injury, the accomplishment of which had been prevented by circumstances alone, had been the means of his arriving at a knowledge of facts, which, in all human probability would never otherwise have been disclosed to him. Under the excitement of strong feeling, however—and under that of extreme rage and disappointment, in particular—a man is not much disposed to reason, or to review the *pros* and *cons*, in a case of this nature, dispassionately. The impression on the mind of Delmaine was, that he had been deeply, wantonly, and irreparably injured, and the chief anxiety he now entertained was to reach the spot where he imagined another scene of infidelity was acting, in sufficient time to have an opportunity of wreaking his vengeance on the heads of the offending parties. Our readers are already aware of the scene which there awaited him.

The whole of the circumstances of this affair now passed in review before him, like the recollections of a dream ; with this difference, however, that the painful facts they elicited bore no resemblance whatever to the dim impressions produced by the former ; they were written in characters of fire on his mind, and not even the thought of the approaching meeting with De Forsac could wholly banish the disgust and humiliation which

grew out of his reflections on the subject. At length he rang his bell.

In a few minutes Walters entered, with a timidity of manner quite unusual with him, and looking exceedingly wan and pale. The old man had for many years been the favourite servant of his father, whom he had borne from the bloody field of Corunna, to the shipping then lying in the bay, where he had received his parting blessing for his son. The attachment he had felt for Major Delmaine was now continued to his child; and when Sir Edward, anxious to secure a home for the humble, but faithful companion of his brother, subsequently purchased his discharge from the service, he had ever been considered as the private attendant of our hero. Delmaine had not seen him since his change of residence, and his heart now smote him for the neglect.

"How do you do, Walters?" he inquired, as the old man, after having laid out his dressing-case, prepared to collect the embers of the wood-fire which lay scattered on the hearth.

"Me, me, sir! did you say me, sir?" rejoined the veteran, putting down the tongs, and coming to his old military position of "attention," as he was wont to do, when addressed by his superiors.

"Yes, Walters," continued Clifford, in the same tone of kindness, "I asked you how you did. You do not seem to be in good health. I hope you have not wanted for any thing since I left you!"

"Oh, no, sir," replied the old man, changing his military attitude for a moment, and brushing away a tear which, in spite of all his efforts, trembled on his lid—"I have only wanted—"

"What have you wanted?" pursued our hero, perceiving his reluctance to finish the sentence.

"I dare say it, sir; it is not for a poor old soldier like me to say what gives him pain."

"Speak, Walters; I insist upon your telling me what you have wanted," continued Delmaine, fancying

that the instructions which he had left for his being supplied with every thing necessary had not been attended to.

"Why then, sir, if I must speak," rejoined Walters, who, too well disciplined to disobey orders, still felt the necessity of some degree of resolution to bear him out in the liberty he conceived he was taking, "I have only wanted to see the son of my old master, the Major, once more beneath the paternal roof, instead of being a stranger to his family. Poor Sir Edward, sir—"

"What of my uncle, Walters? what do you mean by saying poor Sir Edward?" inquired our hero, eagerly.

"Alas, sir, since you quitted this hotel, the health of Sir Edward has been gradually declining; his gout is a great deal worse, and he is confined almost entirely to his bed."

A feeling of bitter remorse passed through the heart of our hero, and he continued silent for a few minutes.

"Have you seen him, then?" he at length demanded.

"Seen him, sir!" rejoined Walters, anxiously, "surely there is not a day that I have not either seen or heard of him. I could as easily have dreamt of deserting my colours before the enemy, as of neglecting so good, so kind, and so affectionate a master. I have called regularly, sir, to inquire after his health."

The unintentional reproach conveyed by the warm reply of the servant, sunk deep into the soul of the nephew. "My poor uncle!" he murmured to himself.

"Tell me, Walters—" he paused a moment, for his pride suggested the impropriety of putting the question he intended to a domestic; but when he recollected that the worthy veteran had known and loved his father, whom he himself scarcely recollected—that he had been present with him in the hour of difficulty and of danger, and had, at the close of his gallant career, stanchd the last blood he was doomed to shed in the service of his country—when he, moreover, remembered that he had ever been a favourite with his uncle, and that he had been attached to his own person ever since his boyhood,

the proud sentiment was checked, and he pursued—
“Tell me, Walters, does my uncle ever speak of me?”

“Speak of you, sir? to be sure he does. The baronet often desires that I may be shown into his room, and then he endeavours to find out, but always in a round-about way, how you are going on; for he still believes, sir, that I have all along been attendant on you, and of course I know my duty too well to undeceive him in that respect. But I am sure, sir, that your long absence from home preys upon his mind, and makes him very unhappy indeed. He is looking more wretched and emaciated every day.”

“Does he never inquire beyond my health?” pursued Clifford.

“No, sir; that is the only question he ever asks me.”

“When did you see him last, Walters?” asked Delmaine, secretly affected by the recital of the old man.

“I saw him three days ago, sir,” was the reply, “and I thought that my heart would have burst while I continued near him. ‘Walters,’ he said, ‘you have been the tried and faithful servant of my brother, and your hairs have grown gray beneath my roof. I am growing old, and cannot live many months longer, but I have not forgotten you; perhaps when I am gone you will be without a home, and I must not leave you destitute.’ Alas, sir, the baronet spoke in so kind, so gentle a tone, so different from his usual manner, that I wept like a child; but when I ventured to say I hoped I should never want a home while my young master lived, he interrupted me with a sort of displeasure, saying, ‘Pooh! pooh! don’t be such an old fool as to expect any thing of the kind; if your young master can so easily forget the uncle who brought him up from infancy, he will not trouble himself much about an old broken-down domestic like yourself;’ and then telling me he wished to sleep, he sent me away.”

Delmaine was deeply touched. “And who attends

him, Walters, principally in his illness? Would to Heaven Mrs. Carey were here!"

"Oh, sir!" continued the old soldier, in whom the garrulity of age, on a subject like the present, alone could supersede his military habit of conciseness of speech, "he has a much better nurse than Mrs. Carey—and surely one more kind, more attentive, or more affectionate, it would be difficult to procure. All the servants speak in the highest and most respectful terms of Miss Stanley."

"Miss Stanley, did you say?—is Miss Stanley my uncle's attendant?"

"Yes, sir, Miss Stanley herself—the amiable and beautiful Miss Stanley; and Sir Edward, they all say, cannot endure to have any other. She seldom goes out any where now, and she is become exceedingly sad of late. Mr. Dormer, too, is there every day."

"My good Walters, I think I should like a cup of coffee," interrupted Clifford, in a subdued tone, that did not escape the attention of the old man.

"I am sure," he murmured, as he hastened to fulfil the commission, "that my master's heart is in the right place, and that all will yet be well."

Delmaine rose with lighter spirits. "I will write to my uncle this very day," he mentally determined, as he threw himself into his *fautcuil* before the blazing fire, with his legs extended, and his feet resting on the fender. "Alas! poor old man, what a return have I made for all the affection you have borne me. How little did you ever expect that the time would come, when the nephew whom you cherished would be an alien to his home, and a stranger to your affliction."

"Walters," he pursued, as the veteran appeared with his coffee, "let me have my portfolio immediately, and do not be out of the way. I shall want you, in ten minutes, to carry a note for me to the Rue de la Paix."

"To the Rue de la Paix, sir?" rejoined the faithful domestic, unable to conceal his pleasure and surprise; then suddenly recovering himself, he added, "Yes, sir

—certainly—yes”—and he proceeded to lay out the materials for writing, with an eagerness singularly checked by the pains he took to appear indifferent; and when he left the room, his step was lighter, and his countenance altogether more animated.

The recollection of the message he expected, not suddenly flashed across the mind of our hero, and he resolved to defer writing for the present at least. He conceived that, until his affair with De Forzac was finally terminated, it would be folly to make the first advances towards a reconciliation, at the very moment when he was about to engage in a transaction which, he well knew, would not only be productive of pain, but of displeasure, to his uncle.

“I will not write until this meeting has taken place,” he exclaimed to himself, pushing the portfolio from him, and throwing down the pen with which he had traced the first few words of his note.

He rang the bell, and in a few minutes old Walters once more appeared. He was dressed in his best suit of livery, and his countenance, beaming with satisfaction, wore a certain air of indefinable self-importance.

“What! dressed already, Walters? Surely, even in your younger and more glorious days, you never could have got ready for a field-day in half the time.”

“Ah, sir,” returned the veteran, who, like all other veterans, whenever allusion was made to his profession, became somewhat garrulous, “I never attended a field-day, unless it was a field-day before the enemy, with half the pleasure that I attend you now. And any man who should have lived as long with your family as Tom Walters has, would deserve to be tried by a drum-head court martial, and brought to the triangles, were he to prove tardy in executing such a service as the present.”

“What service do you mean?”

“Why, sir, the service of carrying a note of reconciliation from the son of my lamented master to so kind and affectionate an uncle as the baronet.” And the old man seemed to have thrown all the remaining energy

of his nature into the last sentence, while, with his rough and sinewy hand, he wiped a tear of pleasure from his eye.

"A note of reconciliation! How do you know it to be a note of reconciliation, or even that it is intended for my uncle?" observed our hero, somewhat angrily, and apparently displeased with the liberty assumed by his servant. "However," he pursued, "you are mistaken. I have no letter for you. I have changed my mind, and do not intend to write."

"Sir!" ejaculated the old man, the expression of his features changing rapidly to one of bitter pain and disappointment, and his right hand clasping his left, in which he held his hat, while his eyes were involuntarily raised for a moment in despair.

"I tell you that I have no letter," repeated Clifford, perceiving that he remained as if rooted to the spot.

"Yes, sir," said Walters, in a most pitiable accent of despondency, and he slowly approached the door.

"Stop a moment."

The old man obeyed; and the quick, short start of his person, plainly indicated the hope he entertained that his master was about to alter his purpose once more.

"I expect a gentleman—a stranger, to call on me this morning. Should any person inquire for me, you will show him up."

Again the poor old servant evinced his disappointment; and with a sigh, and another "Yes, sir," almost too faint to be heard, he slowly quitted the room.

It was now three o'clock, and our hero wondered what could possibly occasion this singular delay on the part of De Forsac, whose friend, he conceived, ought to have been with him long before. He continued for another hour in the same indolent attitude before the fire, devising plans for the future, and torturing his brain to discover the means of supplying his present exigencies. His purse contained only the two Napoleons, which he had contrived to save during the scramble on the prece-

ding evening in the Place Louvois ; and this was scarcely sufficient to defray even the expense of a carriage to the place of rendezvous. His watch was lying on the mantle-piece before him. It was a very valuable one, and had been his father's, who had intrusted it to Walters for him in his dying hour. While he was yet turning, and looking at it with that feeling of regret with which we view an object, which we almost fancy it sacrilege to part with, without however well knowing how to avoid the sacrifice, old Walters once more made his appearance.

"There are three persons below, inquiring for you, sir, but they appear to be very suspicious looking people."

"Three, did you say?" interrupted our hero. "I expected one only, but as I suppose they are come on the same business, you had better show them up. What do they look like?"

"Like any thing but gentlemen, sir, I am sure ; one in particular seems to be like a parson."

"Like a parson," echoed our hero, smiling at the singular distinction made by his servant between a gentleman and a clerical character ; "I certainly do not expect any person of that description : however, let them be shown up."

He had scarcely concluded the last sentence, when two of the party, evidently too impatient to await the forms of presentation, appeared at the entrance of the apartment. One of these personages was a little thin man, dressed in a full suit of rusty black, with a close curling auburn peruke, which bore some few traces of the powder which was wont, on high days and holidays, to be applied to it. In his left hand, he held a small *chapeau retroussé*, of antique form, and his right grasped a gold headed cane. His companion was a middle-sized, middle-aged man, with nothing particularly remarkable in his generally slovenly appearance, but it was almost impossible not to notice the hawk-like expression of his small, quick, penetrating gray eye,

which seemed to rivet itself wherever it was suffered to linger ; in his left hand he held a scroll of parchment.

"Rather odd fish, indeed, for ambassadors on an affair of honour," thought Clifford, as he requested them to take seats, which Walters, prior to his somewhat reluctant exit, had placed near the fire.

"We have no time to sit," said the little man in black, bowing very politely ; "your name is Delmaine ; I believe—the nephew of an English baronet, are you not ?"

"My name is Delmaine, sir," returned our hero stiffly ; "and I have been waiting at home all the morning, in the expectation of receiving this visit."

"*Vraiment*," said the little man, turning to his companion, with a look of naïve astonishment ; "*c'est fort singulier que cela, Monsieur Grippefort !*"

His companion smiled significantly, and shrugged his shoulders : "*Sans doute Monsieur se trompe*," was his reply.

"Are you not come with a message from the Marquis de Forsac ?" inquired Clifford, who now began to suspect there was something wrong.

"From the Marquis de Forsac ! by no means. *Ce Monsieur*," pointing to his companion, "has been intrusted with the execution of a *procès d'arrêt*, which has been obtained against you, and I am *Juge de Paix du quartier* ! Perhaps Monsieur is not aware that it is an act of *honnêteté* which brings me here. No *huissier* can arrest a gentleman in his apartments, unaccompanied by a *Juge de Paix* ; and as it would be a proceeding *fort désagréable* to be arrested in the open street, this course has been pursued at my own suggestion."

"D——n your civility," muttered Clifford, in English. The little man, who understood not a word of any language but his own, took the exclamation for a compliment, and again very politely bowed.

"But at whose suit has this *procès* been issued ?" he demanded in French, the language in which the conversation was carried on throughout. "Assuredly there

must be some mistake, for I deny that I owe any man in Paris a sum of importance."

The *Juge de Paix* stared, and looked more than usually grave; then, turning to the *huissier*, "*Monsieur Grippefort, lisez le procès.*"

The bailiff untied his scroll, selected one particular paper, and read as desired, when, to the utter astonishment of our hero, he found that he was arrested at the suit of Pierre Godot for the sum of thirty thousand francs.

"Impossible!" he exclaimed; "my promissory notes to him are made payable at six months after date, and one week of the period has not yet expired. This proceeding is infamous, scandalous, and illegal."

"*Pardonnez-moi, Monsieur,*" eagerly interrupted the little *Juge*, determined that our hero should not appear to know more of French law than himself, "it is by no means illegal, but all in the due course of our administration of justice. When a creditor makes oath that his debtor is about to leave the country with a view of defrauding him, he is liable to arrest, even if his bills had been made payable six years after date."

"*Que diable voulez-vous dire, Monsieur?*" observed Delmaine, haughtily: "what has leaving the country and defrauding a creditor to do with the present question?"

"What has it to do with the present question?" repeated the *Juge de Paix*, drawing up his little person to its full height—"why, it has a great deal to do with it. Pierre Godot has sworn positively that you are about to leave Paris for England, with a view to defraud him of the amount of his bills."

Delmaine was petrified at the intelligence.

"*Grand Dieu, quel vieux coquin!*" he exclaimed.

"*Est-il donc vrai, Monsieur?*" inquired the little man, on whom the unfeigned surprise and indignation of our hero now began to produce something like belief in his sincerity—"est-il donc *bein vrai* que vous n'avez pas cette intention?"

"*Monsieur!*" exclaimed Clifford, drawing himself haughtily back, and pausing—then turning to the *huissier*, "*je suis prêt à vous accompagner.*"

"*Un instant,*" said the *Juge de Paix*, "this should be more particularly inquired into;" then approaching, and opening a door communicating with the landing-place, he called in a quick and peremptory tone, for Pierre Godot.

No answer was returned.

"*Pierre Godot,*" he repeated in a yet louder voice—" *si vous désirez que votre jugement d'arrêt soit exécuté, montez sur le champ.*"

In the next instant, the gaunt figure of the money-lender was discernible in the doorway, looking more like a thief caught in the fact, than a fair and honest creditor for thirty thousand francs. He was evidently ashamed and afraid of encountering our hero, whose person he came to identify, in the event of any mistake arising, and he had scarcely strength or courage to put one foot before the other.

"*Approchez, Godot,*" said the man of authority, "*et regardez bien Monsieur.*"

The miser looked up for a moment, but seeing the tall figure of his debtor strongly reflected in the blaze of the fire, near which he stood, his gaze was instantly lowered, and creeping along like a cowed spaniel, he finally planted himself behind the *huissier*, as if for protection.

"Is this the gentleman against whom your *procès d'arrêt* has been obtained? Look at him well, and say whether it be the same?"

Pierre Godot had evidently supplied the loss of his *bésicles*, for after feeling in his coat pocket, with a hand that trembled like an aspen leaf, he at length produced a pair, which, with some little difficulty, he succeeded in placing on his nose; still lingering behind the *huissier*, whose body served as a sort of rampart for him, he effected his *reconnaissance*, with due and befitting caution. Even annoyed and irritated as he felt at

his villany, Delmaine could scarcely suppress a smile at the singular attitude of the miser.

"Is that the gentleman?" repeated the *Juge de Paix*.

"It is!" was the reply.

"And do you still persist in the declaration, on oath, which you have made, that he is about to leave the country with a view to defraud you?"

"There cannot be a doubt of it," muttered the bailiff, half-dreading that he should lose his profits on the occasion.

"I swear it! I repeat it!" exclaimed the money-lender, with unusual earnestness of manner. "I have it from good—from the best authority, and I declare my statement to be true, *Monsieur le Juge*."

"You see," said the latter, addressing our hero, the fact is positively sworn to, and we have only to act accordingly. *Je suis bien fâché, Monsieur*."

"*Puis-je me retirer*," inquired Pierre Godot, trembling, as he now perceived that his debtor was tapping his foot furiously on the floor.

"*Oui, vous pouvez vous en aller*," was the answer.

Three or four strides were sufficient to enable the terrified money-lender to gain the door, and in the next instant he was heard descending the staircase, *quatre à quatre*.

"If Monsieur can find two respectable *propriétaires* to become bail for his appearance at a future period," remarked the *huissier*, as soon as Pierre Godot was gone, "the affair might yet be arranged," and he looked at the *Juge de Paix*.

The *Juge de Paix*, in his turn, looked at Clifford, but Clifford was too much occupied in humming a tune, and looking down at the angry foot with which he still kept beating time on the *parquet*, to notice it.

"Monsieur Delmaine," at length inquired the good-natured little *Juge*, "do you not think you could command bail to answer for your future appearance?"

"No," said our hero, abruptly, and manifesting the same marks of rage and impatience.

"Then I am sorry to say, that you must accompany the *huissier* and myself."

"By all means. You will, however, allow me first to speak to my servant?"

"Certainly," remarked the *Juge*, "all that we require is the security of your person, for which we are answerable."

Our hero rang the bell, which was instantly answered by the faithful old Walters, who now entered, casting a glance of suspicion at his master's visitors, and unable to account for the evident embarrassment of manner which existed among the parties.

"Walters!"

"Sir!"

"I am arrested, and going to prison."

"Good God! Impossible!" exclaimed the old soldier, holding up his hands in an attitude of despair.

"Yes, Walters, I am arrested, and going to prison; now hear my last instructions."

"Yes, sir," said Walters, much agitated.

"You will on no account suffer my uncle to know where I am, or what is become of me."

"Surely, my dear master, you do not mean——"

"Silence! I desire that you will on no account acquaint my uncle with my situation. Recollect, that if you disobey me you will incur my lasting displeasure."

"I will not, sir," sobbed the old man.

"Good! Now, remember my injunctions, for on your attention to these must depend your future claim to my favour." Then turning to the harpies of the law, he declared himself ready to accompany them.

"*Je vous suis, Monsieur*," said the little man, bowing exceedingly low, and motioning to our hero to take the lead.

"God bless you!" said our hero, with emotion, as he passed the spot where the old domestic stood, almost

petrified with astonishment and grief; then, hastening down the stairs, followed by his vigilant guardians, he soon gained the street.

A *fiacre* was waiting to receive them. There was neither bustle nor confusion in the steps that were taken, and not an individual in the hotel, save old Walters himself, was aware that they had issued forth on any extraordinary occasion. The coach drove off, and in less than half an hour, the person of our hero was safely deposited within the walls of Saint Pélagie.

CHAPTER VIII.

So much has been said and written within the last ten years in regard to English society abroad, that little remains to be added on the subject; neither, indeed, was it originally intended that this topic should even have been hinted at in these volumes; but in the course of our story, we are insensibly led into a few concise remarks, which we do not conceive to be at all inappropriate.

Should there be any untravelled Englishman, who imagines that English society abroad—and that in Paris particularly—is conducted on the same principles, and subject to the same restrictions, as in England, that man most completely deceives himself. The channel once crossed, the order of society is completely reversed, and this may in some degree account for the unabated rage for temporary emigration which still prevails among a certain class of persons. If we except the English nobility, whose claims to distinction are of course every where paramount, it will almost invariably be found, that the leading characters in the several towns in France are not those to whom birth and education na-

turally afford claims that would never be disputed in their own country ; but, on the contrary, men who have sprung from nothingness, and who naturally seek to hide that nothingness, by aiming at every species of notoriety which it is in the power of mere wealth to bestow. Were these people—at once rich, illiterate, and vulgar—to herd by themselves, no considerate or reflecting person could for a moment impugn the natural desire they must experience to make a display of that wealth which they have acquired by the labour of their hands, and the sweat of their brows ; but when we see them assuming airs and arrogance, which can be tolerated only in the really high born, and when we behold the respectable gentry, with myriads of whom the shores of France are literally stocked—individuals who, at home, would look down with contempt upon those who now lord it over them in all the consequence of riches—when we see these people fawning, bowing, cringing, and forgetting their own station and dignity, to worship the mere man of wealth, simply because he can afford to give those entertainments which they are too poor to procure themselves, and yet are too mean to forego, even at the price of servility and baseness ; when, we repeat, we see all these things, what but disgust and contempt must be our feelings ? What but regret, too, must we experience from the conviction that foreigners, already too well disposed to judge unfavourably of English manners, are thus led to draw false inferences in regard to the much vaunted aristocracy of society in this country ? These are melancholy facts, yet are they such as no one will venture to deny. It is disgusting, moreover, to observe the extent to which this feeling is carried. In the same degree that the heads of upstart families take the lead on a more extensive scale, so do the young men of the same stamp attempt, on a more limited, an ascendancy over their fellows, which, unfortunately for English pride and English sense, they too frequently succeed in attaining. What resident in Paris has not known *de vue*, or, more unfortunately,

encountered in society the puffed-up and consequential Mr. Reinhold, and the no less self-important Mr. Wide-wood—both of vulgar origin, both wallowing in opulence, and both equally filled with vanity and presumption? Who has not turned away, in disgust, during a morning drive in the Champs Élysées, or the Bois de Boulogne, from the provoking air of condescension with which they have deigned to notice the servile salutations of the really gentle in blood, but plebeian in feeling, the height of whose ambition consists in a desire to be considered on familiar terms with any man who can afford to drive four horses, and give iced champagne?

But if disgust, laughter, and scorn, have been excited by this studied and impudent display of condescension, how much more bitter, and how little flattering to human pride, has been the impression produced on observing the eagerness with which these greetings have been met, nay, hailed, by the persons thus honoured with the notice of these self-important personages. Yet are we correct in affirming that there are many young men, of highly respectable, though not wealthy families, who dance attendance on these upstarts, at the sacrifice of every feeling of pride and of self-esteem, and who blush not to receive favours at their hands, as the tacitly understood price of their servility.

It must not be inferred, because we simply name two characters of this description, that they are solitary instances of the truth of our position. We allude to these particularly, because they are, in some degree—one especially—fixtures in the French metropolis. Many others, most unfortunately there are; but these are, for the most part, birds of passage, who, having fluttered their hour in one capital, invariably wing their course to another, where they exhibit the same splendid and imposing plumage, ever avoiding, however, their own, in which they are well aware they must sink into their original and merited insignificance, and would only be liable to be laughed at for the arrogance of their pretensions, and taunted with the old adage, *Ne sutor ultra*

crepidam. We confess we have not common patience when we reflect on the subject ; for so utter is our abhorrence of this system of innovation, so universally practised by the vulgar and the purseproud, that we never recur to it without having a fit of the spleen.

On the very night of the arrest of our hero, a ball was given by the ambassador, at his residence, to the English ; and to this, as, *par usage*, all the English were invited, offering to the observation of the foreigner a compound of fashion, birth, elegance, vulgarity, lowness, and awkwardness, well calculated to excite surprise. But in the amalgamated state of Anglo-Parisian society, such as we have described it, it would be difficult indeed to make those nice distinctions which would naturally characterize parties of a more private nature. The balls which are, as it is expressed, given to the English at stated periods, are, to a certain extent, public, and more than three fourths of the number assembled are, in general, utter strangers to their host. The simple act of leaving their cards at the hotel of his excellency, is sufficient to entitle every decent person to that distinction : and as a list of names is kept, the invitations are issued accordingly. Of course, the purseproud *ci-devant* slop-seller, or the wealthy and vulgar tallow-chandler, whose daughters may be hourly seen flaunting in all the public promenades, dressed in the most *outré* style of fashion, have the prudence to erase from their cards the distinguishing marks of their respective trades, and as they are *presumed* to be *comme il faut*, there is no obstacle to their admission.

These balls given, as we have observed, at stated periods, and less as a compliment to the individual than to the country to which he belongs, may, in some measure, be compared to the annual entertainments of our lord mayor, with this difference, we must in justice admit, that there is rather more decorum observed at the former than at the latter, and that in Paris people do not quite conceive themselves at liberty to appear in dirty boots. Even at these entertainments the ambassador has,

of course, his private coterie around him, and while the mass of the company eat, drink, dance, talk, and make themselves exceedingly at home, he of course does not feel bound to take any farther trouble about them. Far be it from us, however, to impeach the natural politeness of his excellency. No man filling the same elevated station was ever more proverbial for urbanity and affability of manner, and it is to these qualifications, independently of the talent for which he is remarkable, that are to be attributed not simply the high popularity he enjoys every where throughout the French capital, but a facility of arriving at much valuable information connected with his diplomatic character, which we believe few other of our ambassadors possess.

To this ball the Stanleys had received a particular invitation; and as the health of Sir Edward Delmaine had been somewhat improved within the last day or two, it was the wish of her father that Helen should attend. Even the good old baronet declared, that unless she consented, he would no longer suffer her to officiate as his nurse; thus pressed on every hand, Helen was, though much against her inclination, at length compelled to acquiesce in their wishes.

Our readers will recollect, that on the return of Frederick Dormer and Miss Stanley from the gardens of the Tivoli, on the morning of the receipt of the anonymous communication by the colonel, their attention was arrested by the somewhat noisy adieus exchanged between Madame Dorjeville and her daughter, and that on looking up at a window whence the sound of one of the voices proceeded, they at the same moment beheld Delmaine standing at the side of the young Frenchwoman, with one arm encircling her waist. At the instant of that discovery, the indignation of both was highly excited, for they believed that nothing less than insult was intended; but when they remarked the utter confusion of our hero's manner, on being directed to them by his companion, they were satisfied that the circumstance was purely accidental. Yet were they both

much hurt and offended, and Helen in particular, now that her own observation had furnished her with proof of the attachment of Delmaine for the young stranger, felt cruelly pained and disappointed. No remark, however, was exchanged between Dormer and herself; and from that moment, by a sort of tacit agreement, the name of our hero was never mentioned or alluded to by either.

But although Helen affected indifference on the subject, it was but too evident to Dormer that she deeply felt the dereliction of his friend, for her spirits now deserted her, and she frequently appeared plunged in abstraction and melancholy. This visible alteration in her manner did not escape the attention of her fond and anxious father; and had it not been for the precarious health of Sir Edward, who had been gradually sinking under the feelings induced by the absence of his nephew, he would at once have proceeded on his journey to the south. But while actuated by a desire to try whether change of scene would not restore the natural tone of her spirits, and recall the gayety and cheerfulness of disposition of which she had been robbed, he could not summon resolution to part with the suffering friend of his youth in a land of strangers. Sir Edward, it is true, was several years his senior, but the disparity of their ages had never proved a barrier to the warm intercourse of their friendship. This sentiment had increased with their years, and since their recent reunion seemed to be essential to the happiness of both. As for Helen, she declared that her father's anxieties and fears were entirely imaginary, and that her spirits were never less impaired, hinting, at the same time, that to leave Paris for the country, would rather have a tendency to increase than to diminish any melancholy he might observe in her. As Walters had faithfully reported to his master, she now became the assiduous nurse of the good old baronet, whose irritation against Clifford frequently burst forth in murmured exclamations, as he hourly discovered new proofs of her goodness and worth, and ex-

perienced the effects of her almost filial care and solicitude.

Independently, however, of the secret satisfaction which she felt in administering to the wants, and alleviating the sufferings of the uncle of *him* whom she could not deny she still loved, despite of all his faults, *Helena* moreover found, in the new duties she had imposed on herself, a pretext for declining the numerous invitations which at that season of the year came pouring in from every quarter. Society, instead of affording her either pleasure or distraction, could now only increase the vacuum at her heart, since he who alone could make society dear to her, had, she well knew, almost wholly withdrawn himself from the circles wherein they had been wont to meet. Although far from entertaining any of the romance and folly of love, Miss Stanley did not find that her strong good sense rendered her woman's heart one whit less susceptible of those passionate feelings which, while they are pledges of a superior and refined understanding, glow with fiercer energy from the very efforts taken to subdue them. In the commencement of their acquaintance she had esteemed Delmaine. His high and manly spirit, and his open and generous nature, had excited her admiration; and that admiration, fed by the peculiar talent of pleasing which he possessed in no ordinary degree, joined to the elegance of his manners, and the beauty of his person, had ripened into an affection which not even his recent conduct could wholly destroy. She had compared him with other young men in society, and had ever found the scale of preponderance to be greatly in his favour; nay, it was the very recollection of these often-instituted comparisons that now induced her dislike to mingle amid scenes which he had been wont to enliven with his presence, but whence he now appeared to be self-banished for ever. But, although the colonel had ceased to combat the extreme disinclination to mix in society which she constantly avowed, he continued firm in his desire that she should avail herself of the special invitation which

had been sent them by his excellency to the annual ball. This, therefore, urged as she was by her father, supported by the instances of Sir Edward himself, she found it impossible to decline ; and as Dormer was to join their party, she felt the less hesitation in complying with their wishes, since she entertained a secret hope, that at a party given on this extensive scale, it was not impossible that Delmaine might be present. With a beating heart, therefore, yet with more than ordinary attention to her toilet, did she ascend the carriage which was to convey them to the Faubourg St. Honoré.

It was nearly eleven o'clock when they reached the scene of gayety. The splendid hotel of the ambassador was brilliantly lighted up, and above the grand entrance were to be seen the royal arms of England, thrown into strong relief by the numerous surrounding lamps ; the streets, for several hundred paces on either side of the hotel, were nearly blocked up with carriages of every description, and the lively strains of several full bands announced that the dancing had commenced. In spite of all her efforts to appear gay, Helen felt an almost insufferable *serrement de cœur*, as she alighted from the carriage, and, taking the arm of her father, hastened through the closely thronged rooms to an inner apartment, where their host and hostess, surrounded by the most distinguished of their guests, were assembled. The ambassadors and envoys of the several foreign courts were present, decorated with their respective orders, and seemed rather to enjoy, than to participate in the amusements around them.

We have already observed, that Miss Stanley had paid unusual attention to her toilet, although her costume was simple even in its richness. Her dress was of white satin, trimmed with deep blonde, which, adapting closely to her shape, beautifully delineated the outline of her full person. A band of silver tissue, fastened in front by a diamond clasp, encircled her waist ; and from her full, white, and delicately formed neck, depended a star-shaped knot of diamonds, attached to a chain of

the same precious gems ; while the eye was equally dazzled by the snowy whiteness, and symmetrical fulness, of the blue-veined arms, and the broad star-studded diamond bracelets which enclosed them. A comb of gold, sparkling also with the same brilliants, confined her luxuriant hair, in which a single half-blown rose alone was visible, and which, overshadowing her pale and expressive features, imparted an air of ineffable dignity and interest to her whole person. A low murmur of approbation escaped the lips of many as she entered, and every eye was involuntarily turned upon her. Helen could not affect to be insensible to manifestations so unequivocally rendered ; but while only the faintest shade of red coloured her pallid cheek, she moved and looked with that apparent unconsciousness, which belongs only to the woman of birth, fashion, education, and sense.

But if her woman's feelings were flattered and gratified by the homage thus universally tendered to her commanding beauty, there was a tribute offered to the gentleness and amiability of her appearance, far more dear than the mere meed of admiration. In that assembled group there was one individual whose heart already bounded to meet hers, and whose tenderness and love for her far exceeded in value the mere homage paid to physical attractions. That individual was a female, young, lovely, like herself, but of a different style of beauty. Nothing in the shape of woman could be more delicately moulded than this young creature, who seemed more like a sylph than a being of materiality. Her form, highly characterized by grace and lightness, seemed to float in air, and there was a language in her very movements, which inspired confidence and affection at the first glance. Her hair, of the lightest brown, was of great luxuriance, and her soft blue eyes, beaming with sensibility, portrayed the several feelings of her soul without disguise. Once or twice Helen had caught her gaze riveted on herself with the utmost intenseness of expression ; nay, her speaking form ap-

peared ready to throw itself forward, as if only waiting a corresponding signal to rush into her embrace, and give full vent to the generous emotions of her heart. The exceeding *naïveté* and sensibility of the young girl, deeply affected Miss Stanley, and she turned to inquire of her father if he knew who the young stranger was. Finding, however, that he was engaged in conversation, she desisted, and immediately afterwards she was joined by her lively, and good-natured, thoughtless friend, Madame de Sabreuil.

“*Eh bien, ma chère, comment vous portez vous ?*—By the by—what have you done with the handsome Delmaine?—we never see him now.”

Helen felt her colour rise, as she replied, “That she could give her no information, as she had not seen Mr. Delmaine for some time.”

“Well, how droll !” exclaimed her friend—“we had all determined it was to be a match, and certainly there could not have been a nicer pair ; but I suppose he takes a French wife, and you, *par conséquence*, a French husband—*De Forsac n'est-ce pas ?* *À propos, j'ai ouï dire que votre Anglais est devenu un peu roué dernièrement.* Dear me,” she pursued, in the same unconnected strain, without perceiving the increasing confusion of Helen, “*que du monde il y a ce soir—tout Paris est ici.*—Oh, look—do you know who that pretty little creature is leaning on the arm of the American *Chargé d'Affaires*?—*Dieu, quels jolis yeux bleus—quelle taille mignonne !*”

“Is that the American *Chargé d'Affaires* with her?” inquired Helen. “In that case she is probably a countrywoman of his own.”

“Impossible !” said Madame de Sabreuil ; “the back woods of America could never produce any being half so *distingué*. However, we will not say as much for the elderly lady on the other side. I am certain she is of the last century, and looks like nothing European, much less Parisian.”

“There appears to me to be much benignity of expression in her countenance,” remarked Helen.

"*C'est possible*," said her vivacious friend, with a slight shrug of the shoulders; "*mais je la trouve horriblement mal mise*."

The little group thus subjected to their criticism, now turned away from the pertinaciously levelled eye-glass of the lively Frenchwoman, and as they did so, Helen fancied that an expression of mortification and disappointment overshadowed the features of the younger female.

"Good God!" she exclaimed to herself: "how unfortunate. This affectionate girl, who is evidently disposed to like me, thinks, perhaps that I have been indulging in unkind remarks, and repaying her evident preference with ridicule. Would that I had an opportunity of undeceiving her."

"*Allons, ma chère*," exclaimed the countess, "*vous avez absolument l'air d'un déterré—passons dans la salle de danse*"—and taking her arm she led her back into the grand suite of apartments.

They lingered for a few minutes near a circle of waltzers, and then seated themselves on a vacant ottoman at the further extremity of the room. Helen looked around for the figure of Delmaine; but although almost every Englishman in Paris was present, the form she fondly sought was nowhere to be seen. Dormer had not yet made his appearance; and amid that gay and animated crowd, notwithstanding all the lively sallies of her companion, she felt that she had never been more utterly alone than at that moment.

A tall, stiff-looking man, about thirty, dressed in the last style of fashion, and with a cambric *mouchoir brodé* applied to his face, now approached the ottoman.

"Will you do me the favour to dance the next quadrille with me?" he asked in a tone of self-sufficiency, and pursing his upper lip in such a manner as to display a set of tolerably white teeth, which he seemed to think were irresistible.

"I beg to be excused, sir: I do not intend to dance,"

returned Helen, somewhat haughtily, and not a little surprised at this invitation from a perfect stranger.

The gentleman coloured deeply, and as he stalked away, filipping his white cambric, his features betrayed the action of wounded self-love, anger, and disappointment.

"My dear girl, how could you possibly refuse him? Do you not know that the aspirant for your hand is no other than the dashing Mr. Reinhold, who drives his four-in-hand through the Champs Elysées every day? *Mon Dieu!*" she pursued, "any other girl would have been delighted at such an offer."

"Really," returned Helen, smiling at the degree of importance attached by her friend to the four-in-hand driver, "I cannot say I feel the honour that was intended me, exactly in the same light; but the fact is, I do not purpose dancing at all this evening: were I otherwise disposed, however, I certainly should not, on an occasion like the present especially, think of standing up with any gentleman to whom I had not been introduced."

"Dear me, how droll," said Madame de Sabreuil; "for my part, I would dance with any body who asked me, provided he could dance well. There, for instance," pointing to another very tall gentleman, whose eyes were glancing round the room, as if in search of a partner worthy of himself, "that is the only man in Paris worth dancing with. *C'est un danseur divin, que ce Monsieur Darté.*"

At that moment, the glance of the individual alluded to caught hers, and reading perhaps in her countenance, the thoughts that were passing in her mind, he advanced, and with nearly the same blended stiffness and condescension of manner, solicited what he termed the favour of dancing a quadrille with her, although it was quite evident that he fancied the favour was altogether on his own side. Mr. Darté was not of course aware that the lady was a countess.

Madame de Sabreuil smiled, and bowing her assent,

whispered to Helen, "*Voyez comme il danse bien.*" She then tripped lightly forward to resume a vacant place in the nearest set.

While Helen sat admiring the easy and elegant movements of her friend, and contrasting them with the studied attitudes, and professor-like steps of her partner, from whose sweeping, and as she thought, vulgar pirouetting, every female in the set seemed anxious to rescue her thin draperies, the individual whom the countess had designated as Mr. Reinhold, accompanied by another *fat*, as unmeaning and puppyish in appearance, threw himself at the opposite end of the large ottoman on which she reclined.

"Well, Widewood," inquired the former, raising his eternal cambric to his face, as he stretched himself at his full length, gaping most horribly, "what news, my boy—how are all the women?"

"News, damme—I can't say," returned his companion, trimming his whiskers with a small tortoise-shell *peigne à moustache*; "you know I never go out before four, and then we fashionable fellows have something else to think of besides news."

"True, true; but do you know it's confounded hot here: who the devil ever saw such a crowd collected beneath one roof? besides, there seems to be all sorts of people here to-night"—and he glanced superciliously at Miss Stanley, to denote that she was one of the "all sorts of people."

"*Canaille absolument*, as the French say," returned the man of the beautiful *boudoir*. "I wonder where, in the name of fashion, S—— (familiarily repeating the ambassador's name) could possibly have collected all these people? I am horribly sick of it already."

"So am I, by my soul," rejoined Mr. Reinhold, yawning again most furiously, and cramming his cambric half way down his throat. "How," he resumed, when this operation was achieved, "how can all these good people endure to dance! Now do only look at that indefatigable fellow Dart: positively the man

dances as if for life and death, and yet he is never tired.
I wonder he does not wear his feet out."

"Poor creature, how I pity his taste," drawled forth Mr. Widewood, examining the tall operator through his fashionable eye-glass. "Who is that vulgar-looking little woman he has got hold of now?" he pursued, leveling his glance at the chaste and elegant little figure of the countess.

"Don't know," replied his self-satisfied companion—"some nobody knows who, I dare say," and again his supercilious, but unnoticed glance, was directed towards Helen.

"How odd that all these people should find entrance here," half soliloquized Mr. Widewood.

"By the way," resumed the other, "do you know what's become of Torrington?—it's quite an age since I've seen him."

"Ruined beyond redemption, and now doing penance for his sins in Saint Pélagie.—By the by, who do you think I saw going to prison this evening?"

"How the devil should I know? some man of no consequence, I suppose."

"Don't you recollect the young fellow who made so much noise about town, a short time ago, in consequence of an affair with De Hillier?"

"Let me see—yes, I think I do; the son, or nephew, or cousin, of some broken-down old baronet, is he not?"

"The same," pursued his worthy informant. "I was obliged to go through that horrid Faubourg St. Germain in the course of the day, and as I returned through the Rue de la Clef, just as I arrived opposite the prison, I saw him step out of a hackney-coach, followed by a little fellow in black, about four feet and a half high, and that rascally bailiff, Grippefort?"

"Capital!" exclaimed Mr. Reinhold, grinning in delight at the idea—"I wonder if he is in for much?"

"I should rather think for a good round sum, for

that old bloodhound, Grippefort, seemed to stick devilish close to him," was the facetious reply.

"Excellent!—by Jove, an excellent mode of ascertaining the extent of one's debts," resumed the man of the cambric; "but come, let us walk a little, for I find it horribly stupid here;" and to the great relief of Helen, they rose, and were soon lost amid the surrounding groups.

The feelings of Miss Stanley during the colloquy of these mushroom exquisites, may be much better conceived than described. At the very opening of their conversation she really felt terrified, for she knew not how soon her ears might be wounded by expressions offensive to her delicacy, from the lips of men whose pretensions to gentlemanly distinction consisted infinitely more in their dress, than in their address, and she looked around in vain for her father or for Dormer. From her more immediate acquaintance she was entirely cut off by the dense crowd of dancers and loungers, and to attempt a passage through such a throng alone, she felt would be utterly useless; she was therefore compelled to listen to the several remarks that were made in a key of offensive loudness: and although she appeared not to notice the ungentlemanly inuendoes of the person with whom she had declined dancing, she distinctly understood them to be made in reference to herself. Then, indeed, a flush of indignation overspread her cheek, for all the pride of her warm nature was aroused, and had either Dormer or her father approached at that moment, she would not have hesitated to communicate the nature of the insult. The feeling, however, was but momentary: in the next instant she regained her self-possession, and her contempt for the offenders. Alas, she little fancied their conversation was to assume the highest interest for her—that they would cause her to hang upon their words with breathless and aching interest—and that they would succeed in blanching the cheek into which they had previously called up the glow of indignation. Pale, agitated, suffering, she listened to the

cold-blooded recital of the younger of the two intruders in dismay ; and to such a pitch had her emotion increased, when they finally quitted the ottoman, that she momentarily feared a betrayal of her feelings. .

“ Good God !” she mentally exclaimed, when they were gone, “ is this, then, the termination of his follies ?—Dear, generous, but misguided Delmaine, how sincerely does my heart deplore your situation ! But can it be really Delmaine whom he has seen ? may he not have been deceived ? Alas, no ! for the unfeeling jester has described him as being the relative of a baronet—nay, more, as the successful opponent of that too well remembered Comte de Hillier ;” and as Helen thought of the duel, its cause and circumstances arose to her recollection—“ Yet, he,” she pursued, in her agitated musings—“ he who made my cause his own, who risked his life for my sake, is, at this moment, perhaps, stretched on some miserable couch, within the gloomy and comfortless walls of a prison—while I am here !”

The quadrilles were now terminated, and Madame de Sabreuil resumed her place at her side, asking half a dozen questions in a breath, and waiting for an answer to none—all these were in regard to her very interesting partner, Mr. Darté.

Helen knew not whether to be pleased or disappointed at her return, for, in her present state of mind, she found the extreme volubility of the countess highly painful and perplexing. She was about to propose returning to the apartment in which she had left her father, when her companion suddenly exclaimed,

“ *Ah, mon Dieu, voilà votre ami sérieux qui nous approche !—je me sauve, ma belle !*” and, bounding from the ottoman, she skipped away with all the vivacity of a Frenchwoman, to join some friends at a little distance.

Helen looked up, and, to her great satisfaction, beheld Donner. Never, however, had the crime of seriousness been laid with less justice to his charge—his



countenance was bright with smiles, and his features wore an air of unusual exhilaration.

"My dear Helen," he exclaimed, "I have been looking for you every where—come, come along with me—I wish so much to introduce you to—but, good God, how pale you look!—what is the matter?" and he seated himself at her side.

"Dormer," rejoined Helen, seriously, "do you know that Delmaine is in prison?"

"You surprise me—since when?—where did you obtain your information?"

Helen, in a few words, explained the conversation that had passed between the individuals, whose persons we have described.

"Excellent!" exclaimed Dormer, smiling to himself, as he at once recognised the upstart tradesman's son, in each of these would-be fashionables. "Nay, my dear Miss Stanley," he pursued, perceiving the surprise she could not avoid manifesting at his ill-timed gayety, "do not be offended with me—if you knew what cause for exhilaration I have to-night, what motives for happiness I have experienced—"

"Exhilaration!—happiness! Mr. Dormer, do I rightly understand you, or can it be that you also possess the more worldly and convenient ideas of friendship? Surely it must be so, or you could not thus manifest gayety and indifference, at the very moment you are told that the man whom you once considered your best friend, is lingering within the walls of a prison. I fear I have been deceived in you," she continued, with warmth, and turning from him.

"Good God! Miss Stanley, can you so far misjudge me, as to believe that my heart does not bleed for the situation of Delmaine? Have you not known me sufficiently long to think better of my feelings and my principles? Helen," he pursued, in a more subdued and somewhat reproachful tone, "you are familiar with the history of my past life—you are aware of what I

have suffered—you know how I have loved. Helen, Agatha is here."

"Agatha Worthington? Is it possible?" exclaimed Helen, the warm tide of her feelings undergoing a sudden and delightful revolution. "Oh! forgive me, Dormer—where, where is she?"

"Within these very walls,—even in one of the adjoining apartments, where I have only left her in order to seek you, in whom I have prepared her to expect a friend, nay, more, a sister."

"I also am prepared to be all these," returned Miss Stanley; "but, alas! Dormer, how melancholy is the reflection, that so much happiness should be thus cruelly embittered."

"Helen," resumed Dormer, with earnestness, "I am sure you will believe me when I say, that I never was more the friend of Delmaine than at this moment. The very intoxication of my own happiness must be a pledge of my sincerity; and in the hour of emergency I hope I shall never be found wanting—yet nothing, you know, can be done to-night. In the morning, I will make every necessary inquiry; and, if you will join me in the breakfast-room half an hour earlier than usual, we shall be enabled to confer more at leisure on the subject."

"Good," said Helen, rising, and with a look full of acknowledgment. "And now for your dear, long lost, and interesting Agatha—what is she like?"

"Nay, I shall not gratify your curiosity," replied Dormer, joyfully, yet in a tone of perfect consciousness that the object of his affection would be found worthy of approbation.

Forcing their way through the dense groups which obstructed their passage, they finally succeeded in gaining what we have already described as the more private apartments of his excellency. Dormer approached the spot where he had left his friends, but they were no longer there, and he looked impatiently round to discover them amid the crowd.

"Good Heavens!" involuntarily observed Helen,

glancing in the direction of a small group, "does my father know those ladies?"

"Where are they?" asked Dormer. "They must be the party we seek, for I left the colonel with them."

"Is it possible? Is this, then, Agatha Worthington?" exclaimed Helen, a thrill of delight creeping through her blood, while she pointed through an opening to a distant part of the room.

"It is, indeed, Helen," returned Dormer, passionately, "the dear, the fond, the unchanged and unchangeable Agatha, whom I had never expected to behold again."

On a low ottoman sat the two ladies whom Helen had, in the early part of the evening, observed leaning on the arm of the American envoy. With the elder, Colonel Stanley seemed to be engaged in low and earnest conversation: her companion sat apart, as if unwilling to attend to their discourse, which she evidently imagined related to herself. Her head was bent over a white rose, which Helen had previously remarked in her bosom; and this she was now diligently employed in picking to pieces.

As they approached she looked up, and, with a start of pleasure and surprise, half rose to meet them, while her countenance expressed all the deep and concentrated rapture she experienced. In the next instant, however, she looked pale, as if struggling with some secret feeling, and resumed her seat; but again, with the rapidity of lightning, the expression of her countenance was changed to one of glowing energy.

We pass over the forms of introduction—those (nineteen times out of twenty) heartless forms, by which alone we can ever expect to arrive at communion of soul with those who, in the generous fervour of youth, we are already predisposed to love and to admire. Suffice it to observe, that after the usual quantum of sacrifice of ceremony, the parties were made acquainted with each other; and never were two women better prepared to experience the delight attendant on mutual confidence.

and affection, than Helen Stanley and Agatha Worthington.

So long had the former been accustomed to think of her new friend, in consequence of the glowing and affecting descriptions given her by Dormer—so completely had she identified her with every more gentle and amiable attribute of disposition—so often also had she called up her image, such as she had fancied it to be on the evening of their separation, that her own warm heart had frequently been filled with the desire of beholding her, whom she felt she could love with all the generous effusion of a kindred spirit. When Dormer communicated the unexpected intelligence of her being, even then, beneath the same roof, she experienced, amid all her distress for the misfortunes of Clifford, that rush of wild and delightful emotion, which it might be supposed would have marked her satisfaction at the return of some long loved, long estranged, and long absent sister. For a moment, as they pursued their way through the crowd, the image of the young stranger arose to her mind ; but an instant's reflection was sufficient to dispel the delusive hope. Nearly ten years had elapsed since Dormer had left the object of his affection in the wilds of America, a young girl of sixteen ; and this interesting being did not appear to have numbered more than twenty summers. For this imaginary disappointment she was, however, consoled by the almost certainty she entertained, that the beloved of Dormer would be found no less attractive and fascinating ; but, what was her delight when the sudden observation of her friend, in reply to a remark of her own, satisfied her, that Agatha Worthington and the stranger were the same. Then, indeed, for a moment, was Delmaine forgotten ; and, as she advanced to meet the ingenuous and animated looking girl, the full tide of her affections flew before her, and her eyes beamed forth all the happiness of her soul.

And what were the feelings of Agatha on discovering, in the friend of her lover, the being on whose majestic beauty she had gazed with a feeling amounting almost

to adoration, even as a fond and admiring child would gaze upon the maturer and more imposing charms of a still youthful mother. At the moment when, raising her eyes from her faded flower, she beheld Dormer advancing with the stranger who had so strongly excited her sympathy, her warm and generous heart was one concentrated glow of love, surprise, admiration, and pleasure. The impression of the succeeding minute, however, paled her cheek; and, indeed, when it is considered that Dormer had described this superb creature as a dear, valuable, and esteemed friend, whom he had known almost since his separation from herself, it will scarcely be deemed unpardonable in Agatha, that she should, for a moment, have entertained a pang of jealousy. This unworthy feeling, however, continued not. Chasing the ungenerous thought from her mind, her countenance once more expressed all the powerful and affectionate feelings of her heart, and her soul, like that of Helen, was full of the happiness of the present.

In the elder female, we presume, our readers will have no difficulty in recognising the good aunt Worthington, to whom Dormer now paid nearly as much attention as to Agatha—an attention which she well merited, since the same kind and benignant sentiments seemed to mark her manner towards him, and Helen had no difficulty in discovering the original of a portrait of benevolence, which had often, both in India and in Europe, claimed alike her admiration and esteem.

Both our chapter, and the only interesting incident of this ball, connected with our story, being spun out to an inordinate length, we will simply observe, that, after a short, but expansive, interchange of feelings and professions between the English and American friends, and an equally amiable understanding among all parties, they finally separated for their respective homes, mutually pleased with each other, and highly delighted at the important event to which the evening had given birth.

The carriage of the Worthingtons being driven off,

Dormer handed Miss Stanley into hers, taking that opportunity of whispering, unobserved by the colonel, that he would be in the breakfast room at the hour appointed. Shaking hands with her father, whose noble heart entered deeply into the happiness which awaited his young and long-esteemed friend, he then took his leave, and with a heart full of enchanting hopes, and a brain exhilarated as with the fumes of champagne, repaired to his hotel.

CHAPTER IX.

PARISIAN reader, have you ever been in Ste. Pélagie ? Let us, however, understand each other. We, of course, are not so ill-bred as to insinuate, for a moment, that any reader of ours was ever an inmate of a place of the kind ; but it might have so chanced that you had visited some d——d unlucky, imprudent fellow of a friend, confined within its walls—some silly dog, whom you may have pitied from your soul—one to whom you longed to declare over a bottle of *champagne rosé*, if the luckless wight could yet afford one, that, had he taken your advice, he never would have been placed in such a predicament. We repeat, it might have chanced that you had visited some unfortunate fellow of this description about the dinner hour, that is, at lamp-light, in which case you might, in glancing over these pages, comprehend, in some measure, the surprise of our hero, on his first introduction into this scene of confusion ; although, as of course, you did not enter with the same impressions, and under the same circumstances, the novelty of the situation would not have been embittered by the same ulterior recollections.

After hearing the ponderous gates of the exterior

prison cautiously closed upon him, Delmaine was conducted to the *greffe*, where he was detained upwards of half an hour, while Monsieur Grippefort went through the tedious and customary form of delivering him over to the custody of the *concierge*. Here he had sufficient leisure to examine the numerous bunches of massive keys, which hung suspended from huge nails, with which the walls were thickly studded, and to derive, from the appearance of the strong iron bars by which the windows of the *bureau* were secured, a very tolerable idea of the apartment he supposed was intended for himself.

The table, on which lay scattered the several papers connected with his arrest, was lighted by a dim and solitary lamp, which threw every thing beyond a certain extent of circle, completely into shadow, insomuch, indeed, that objects at the further extremity of the *greffe* were actually buried in obscurity, while those within the influence of this halo, if we may so term it, were distinctly visible from every part of the room. Somewhat impatient in the delay thus occasioned to his final commitment, he rose from the seat which he had occupied near the table, and stalked past the *concierge* towards a distant corner of the apartment. Scarcely, however, had he reached this confine of light and darkness, when his foot struck against some hard substance, and he was startled by a well-known voice, exclaiming, in accents of terror,

"*Ah ! mon Dieu, Monsieur !—je vous prie en grâce. Ce n'est pas de ma faute—c'est Monsieur le Marquis de Forsac qui me l'a dit.*"

"*Qui vous a dit quoi ?*" replied Clifford, quickly, and recognising the money-lender, over whose enormous foot he had accidentally stumbled in the dark."

"*Il m'a dit que vous deviez partir pour l'Angleterre sans me payer,*" continued the miser.

Delmaine ground his teeth with rage and confusion.

"*Qu'y a-t-il ?*" demanded the *concierge*, nearly as much alarmed as if his whole flock were about to issue

from their fold. "*Qui est-ce?*" he pursued, grasping Pierre Godot by the throat with one hand, while he held the lamp up to his face with the other.

"*C'est moi,*" exclaimed the trembling dotard, "*c'est moi, le créancier de Monsieur.*"

The *concierge* relaxed his hold, and turned to the *huissier* for an explanation. "*Il a raison,*" remarked the latter. "*C'est, en effet, le créancier de Monsieur.*"

Filled with surprise and indignation at the declaration of the old man, Clifford resumed his seat; and it now appeared, in the course of explanation, that the miser, in his anxiety to see his debtor properly secured, had preceded the *fiacre* to the prison; and finding every facility of ingress to the *greffe*, had contrived to place himself so as to be enabled to observe all that passed, without running the risk of being discovered himself. He had seen our hero quit his seat and advance towards him. Unconscious, at the moment, that his own person was in some measure invisible, his fears immediately suggested the idea that some violence was intended—a surmise that was at once converted into certainty by the accidental collision of their feet.

At length Clifford was finally handed over to the custody of his new keeper; and the usual sum of twenty-two francs, for one month's subsistence, having been deposited in the hands of the latter, the worthy Monsieur Grippefort, and his still more worthy employer, Monsieur Pierre Godot, took their leave.

"*Monsieur, désire-t-il être à la pistole?*" demanded a huge monster of a *guichetier*, on whose hard features were legibly written that callousness of heart, peculiar to those who are familiarized with suffering in all its several stages.

Delmaine stared at the fellow with surprise, for he was utterly at a loss to comprehend his meaning.

The *guichetier* repeated his question, clanking, at the same time, a bunch of enormous keys, but with as little chance of an answer, when the *concierge* proceeded to

state what we shall endeavour, for the benefit of our readers, to explain.

In the French prisons, the *détenus* for debt are divided into two classes—the one *à la paille*, the other *à la pistole*. It of course must be unnecessary to observe, that the former are a set of *souless*, shoeless wretches, whose sole means of subsistence are derived from the pittance we have named, which is regularly advanced to the *conciergerie*, by the creditor, for his use, and without which no arrest is tenable. This trifling sum, barely sufficient to enable them to keep body and soul together, of course affords no overplus for comforts even of the most ordinary description; and the only couch of repose allotted to the unfortunate prisoner, who is destitute of all other resource, is the damp and scanty portion of straw, usually furnished by the prison. Those, on the other hand, who are *à la pistole*, enjoy at least the luxury of beds, from which enormous profits are derived by the *conciergerie*, by whom they are almost exclusively provided. The price of one of the most miserable description, consisting simply of a mattress and a blanket, in a room furnished with a deal table and a couple of rush-bottomed chairs, varies from ten to twenty francs per month. Some of the rooms in Ste. Pélagie are, however, rather handsomely fitted up, and the charges for these are from fifty to a hundred francs and upwards. Except in very particular instances, and where a handsome *douceur* is paid for the privilege, a debtor has seldom even the consolation of having an apartment to himself; and the bitterness of his situation is heightened by the circumstance of his being thrown among people of doubtful character—criminals often being introduced into the prison of the debtor.

“What!” exclaimed our hero, when these several circumstances were explained to him, “can I not then have a room to myself?”

“I am afraid not,” replied the *conciergerie*—“the private rooms are all occupied, and we shall have some difficulty in placing a bed for you, even in one of the

more public ones—*Combien de lits François,*” turning to the *guichetier*, “*y-a-t-il dans Numéro 18 ?*”

“*Il n’y a que cinq,*” rejoined the gruff delegate ; “*on trouvera de la place pour Monsieur.*”

Clifford thought of the comfortable lodging whence he had so recently been dragged, and shuddered at the idea of entering an apartment already containing five inmates.

“I would willingly pay any sum,” he exclaimed with earnestness, “for even a solitary blanket in the vilest spot of the whole prison, provided I could be alone.”

Again the *concierge* looked at his delegate ; “Could you not contrive to find some place for Monsieur ?” he asked.

The *guichetier* hesitated, with the air of one who is endeavouring to recollect. Clifford argued favourably from this circumstance, and catching the eye of the Cerberus, showed him a Napoleon, unobserved by the gaoler. A peculiar and almost imperceptible nod, satisfied him that the hint was not thrown away.

“*Mais, oui,*” he drawled at length, pushing his hat at the same time a little on one side, and scratching his head—“there is the small room in which the English gentleman died yesterday ; but perhaps Monsieur would not like that, although the windows have been open ever since, and the place has been thoroughly ventilated.”

How much does our happiness or misery in this life depend on the comparative situations into which we are thrown. No sooner had the *guichetier* admitted that there was a miserable room in the prison vacant by the removal of a corpse, which, for aught Delmaine knew to the contrary, might have putrified there, than the latter eagerly caught at the prospect of privacy thus unfolded to him, and already the idea of his imprisonment was divested of half its horror.

“By all means,” he anxiously exclaimed, turning to

the *conciergerie*; "let me have it—it will be sufficiently ventilated."

The man of office bowed his head in what was meant to be a very condescending manner, in token of assent; then turning to the *guichetier*, and waving his hand with an appropriate motion, "*Conduisez Monsieur, et préparez sa chambre.*"

Issuing from the *greffe*, and followed by his prisoner, the turnkey traversed a sort of hall, and passing through a strong iron gate, which he carefully locked after him, finally gained the extremity of a dark passage, terminated by a gate similar to the preceding, and opening into the body of the prison. The room intended for our hero was situated at the top of the building, and on his way through the several corridors leading to this, his surprise was excited, and his senses assailed in no ordinary degree. We have already observed that it was about the dinner hour, and certainly few of that portion of the prisoners of Ste. Pelagie, who were à *la pistole*, seemed to have forgotten it. On every hand were to be heard orders given to the *garçons* of the several restaurateurs established in the prison; and hurrying to and fro with all the activity peculiar to their *profession*, were to be seen these very useful personages, bearing to their several destinations, soups, fish, fricandeaux, fillets, ragouts, volailles, soufflets: in short, all the thousand and one dishes which distinguish the nomenclature of Parisian cookery, and that with an eagerness and attention not to be exceeded at Very's, Beauvillier's, Prevot's, the Frères Provençaux, or even the Rocher de Cancalle itself. Whatever might be the natural impurities of air, in his new habitation, our hero was utterly unable to detect them, for so great was the odour arising from the myriads of savoury dishes which were hurried through space with almost the same velocity, and dispensing nearly as powerful a perfume, though of a different description, as the *encensoirs* long since used within its once conventual walls, that it fell upon his lungs in steam of at least eighty-horse power; inso-

much, indeed, that even the effluvia arising from the segars and pipes of a number of individuals who were pacing the corridors after having hastily swallowed their more humble and unfashionable meal, was unnoticed. Peals of loud and incessant laughter, which met the ear in his ascent, and in which female voices were distinguishable, marked the total absence of care or reflection. Mingled with these were to be heard the clamorous shouts of Englishmen for supplies of champagne, and those of Frenchmen for bottled beer, with the occasional clinking sound of gold, silver, and copper, as these several articles were paid for. In short, the whole prison appeared to be one complete orgie—one diversified scene of feasting and dissipation. Now and then the entrance or departure of a *garçon* enabled our hero to obtain a glimpse of the inmates of several of the rooms, and curious was the medley of figures occasionally exhibited.

“*Voici votre chambre, Monsieur ; demain nous tâcherons d'arranger de manière que vous soyez mieux logé,*” said the *guichetier*, pushing open the door that creaked like twenty village sign-posts in a gale of wind. Holding up the light, he now disclosed to the observation of our hero a small, damp, sombre-looking room, the walls of which were literally covered with fantastic figures and devices, evidently the *passe-temps* of some of its former inmates. A small folding bedstead, with a canvas bottom, stood in one corner, and on this were thrown a mattress, scarcely an inch in thickness, a discoloured blanket, and a pillow that had obviously not of late been much used to the confinement of a case. Immediately under the small strong iron-barred window, and on a projection of the wall, lay an empty black bottle, that had been made to supply the absence of a candlestick, a pair of rusty scissors, substitutes for snuffers, and a brown earthen jug for water, were placed. These, with an old greasy table, two rush-bottomed chairs, one of which, by the way, had no bottom at all, and a small earthen stove, bound with iron hoops, constituted the

whole furniture of the place. This last article of comfort, or rather of luxury, Delmaine was delighted to behold, for the night, like the preceding, was bitterly cold, and the cursory glance he had thrown over his bed, left him little hope or expectation of rest.

"Can I have a fire?" he inquired, looking around him with an air of the utmost desolation.

"Certainly, if Monsieur pays for it," replied his conductor, who stood waiting for the Napoleon with which his civility had been purchased.

"Sheets, I presume, are out of the question?" continued Clifford, slowly drawing from his purse the last two unfortunate pieces that remained of his loan from Pierre Godot.

"*Je vais en demander*," said the *guichetier*, fixing his gaze upon the purse, and suffering an expression of contempt to play over his rugged features, as he observed how indifferently it was furnished.

"Here is the Napoleon I promised you," pursued Delmaine. "With the other, I wish you to procure me wood and candles for the night, something to eat, and a bottle of wine."

The *guichetier* promised to lose no time in attending to his instructions; then taking the short candle from his own lantern, he placed it in the neck of the bottle, which, in its turn, was removed to the deal table. He next carefully locked the door, drew two or three heavy bolts, and departed, his footsteps falling gradually more faintly on the ear until they were finally lost in distance.

Left to his own meditations, Clifford threw himself into the only habitable chair, when folding his arms, and dropping his head on his breast, he began to revolve in his mind the whole course of his career since his arrival in Paris. It would be superfluous to detail the various feelings of regret consequent on this retrospection. Whatever might have been his follies and his weaknesses, whatever the dereliction produced by his passions, his heart was not closed against truth, neither was his judgment steeled against conviction; but while

his heart and his judgment both satisfied him that he was highly culpable, it required the most powerful efforts of his candour to subdue that extreme haughtiness of spirit which shrunk from the admission of error, even to himself. If such the difficulty of the victory obtained in self-condemnation, how unlikely was it that he should ever suffer the language of remonstrance in another? and yet in the event of a reconciliation with his uncle, how could he possibly hope to escape it? He knew the peculiarities of Sir Edward too well to expect that the past would be blotted out from the page of memory without comment or reprehension, and this, in the present irritable state of his feelings, he was satisfied he could never endure. Nay, such was his restlessness of spirit, his impatience of control, and his jealousy of animadversion, that, had it not been for the self-humiliation produced by the occurrences of the last twenty-four hours, he would scarcely have admitted his faults even to himself. The high tone of his character, the lofty independence of his will, had been increased by the very waywardness of action into which he had deviated. The more he erred, the more haughtily he prepared to defend his conduct against the attacks of those whose right to arraign that error he could not wholly deny; and this feeling had been indulged, until he had half suppressed the very consciousness of wrong. But now that he had been suddenly hurled from the lofty pinnacle of his self-sufficiency, by the double treachery so recently detected, his mind and feelings became more flexible, and he was reluctantly, though in bitterness of heart, compelled to acknowledge the delirium under which he had laboured. Nothing can be more galling to the proud and sensitive mind, than the discovery of falsehood in those whom we believed honoured and flattered by our acquaintance; nothing so humiliating to our self-love, as the idea of being deceived in our estimate of those who have been weighed in the balance of our own supposed immaculate judgment. Delmaine now felt, that while he had imagined his

society and his affection to have been sought for himself alone, he had in reality only been the dupe of two artful and designing characters, whose sole object in seeking his acquaintance had been to deceive and to betray

He was aroused from his reverie by the heavy tread of the *guichetier* along the corridor. In the next minute the bolts were withdrawn, and the man appeared laden with wood, a pair of coarse sheets, and two rushlights.

"*Voici tout ce qu'il vous faut, Monsieur,*" he remarked; "*on vous apportera à manger tout de suite,*" and he proceeded, much to the satisfaction of our hero, to prepare the fire.

"*Le dîner de Monsieur,*" said a tall, active looking *garçon*, who now entered, bearing a tray, whence proceeded an odour that well might have provoked the appetite even of a prisoner for debt, and that too on the first night of his incarceration. Spreading a damp napkin, the very sight of which would have given a fit of ague to a Pelham, he placed a *poulet rôti*, a small loaf of bread, and a bottle of forty sous wine, on the table.

"Rather a scanty dinner for a Napoleon," mused the hungry Clifford, as the fellow withdrew, flipping his *serviette* and bowing, without offering any change in return. "I wonder if it is to include breakfast tomorrow."

"*Monsieur a-t-il tout ce qu'il lui faut pour ce soir?*" inquired the iron-featured *guichetier*, who had succeeded in making a tolerable fire, and now stood with the door in his hand, ready to depart.

Clifford answered in the affirmative, and the careful turnkey once more withdrew, pulling his bolts after him as on the previous occasion.

All things fairly considered, our hero, it must be confessed, made a very tolerable meal, and did more than justice to the bottle of wretched wine, which the excellent arrangements of Monsieur François, the *guichetier*, had caused to be placed before him. Delmaine was

wrong, however, in believing that the *restaurateur* had been enriched by more than one half of the sum he had advanced. Ten francs only was the moderate price of his dinner; the remainder had been very considerably appropriated by the supplier of two fifteen sous *fagots* of wood, and a couple of three-sous rushlights, to his own use.

After pleasure, say the wise, comes pain—so, after dinner, (especially if it be a solitary one,) sometimes comes reflection. When the physical man is gratified, his moral wants demand, and obtain, attention also. Turning slowly from his now uninviting board, and thrusting his feet into the very opening of the stove, Clifford once more leaned his head on his hand, and relapsed into a train of musing. Execrable as the wine was, it was still potent enough to deaden the keenness of his feelings, and when he had emptied the last glass, though far from being seriously affected by it, he was yet sufficiently exhilarated to look forward with some degree of hope to his speedy liberation, even while his imagination scarcely embraced the means by which that liberation was to be effected. Tired, and rendered sleepy by the complicated action of the wine and fire, he at length seized the bottle which contained his rushlight, and approached to examine his miserable resting place. After a close, but by no means satisfactory inspection, he turned to the various devices on the walls, some of which, considering that the only material employed had been a piece of burnt stick, or cork, were ingeniously enough executed. Immediately above the bed, a variety of names had been written in pencil, and, among others, one in larger characters, that appeared to have been recently traced. A long flourish terminated the name, and within it were two or three lines in smaller letters. Clifford raised the light, and, to his surprise, beheld the (to him well known!) name of "Henry Torrington." Within the scroll was written, "Whoever may chance to succeed me in this infernal place, take warning by my example—the *salons d'écarté*

have proved my ruin; abandoned, upbraided by my friends, I have endured every degree of wretchedness—from these walls I have no expectation of relief but in death! Adieu!"

"God of Heaven!" exclaimed Delmaine, suddenly awakened to the fullest consciousness, and shuddering with horror, "can this possibly be?"

Torrington had been one of his early school-fellows, and the intimate friend of the unfortunate Wilmot, whom he had accompanied to France, and with whom he had been *lié* by a similarity of wild tastes and pursuits. Again Clifford read the warning sentences traced by his unhappy friend. From these, it was evident that he had meditated, nay, resolved on self-destruction, and he shuddered to think, that on that very bed on which he had been preparing to rest his weary limbs, the once giddy companion of his boyhood had terminated his own existence. Oh! how hateful did the *salons*, with all their meretricious fascinations, appear to him at that moment—how bitterly did he curse the hour when he first entered them—how deeply did he loathe the images of Adeline and De Forsac.

In a state of intense excitement, he continued to pace up and down the narrow limits of his room, the form of Torrington flitting before his eyes at every instant, as if in the act of terminating his wretched career. "Did he shed blood?" he murmured, as, shuddering at the thought, he beheld, in idea, the warm stream of life descending on the couch which had been prepared for him. Again he approached to satisfy himself, and, with a trembling hand, turned up the mattress, and examined every part of the bedding. There was nothing, however, to indicate that the prisoner had perished by his own hand: not a stain resembling blood was to be seen; and Clifford, whose breath had been suspended during this examination, respired more freely.

A rattling of bolts and keys at the more distant parts of the corridor, now announced that the hour of closing for the night was arrived; and soon afterwards, to the

great relief of our hero, the heavy tread of the *guichetier* was distinguishable near his own door. The man withdrew the bolt, looked in to see that his prisoner was safe, and perceiving that all was right, prepared to reclose the door, when Delmaine arrested him.

"*Un instant !*" he exclaimed eagerly, and beckoning to him with his hand.

The gruff fellow looked surprised, hesitated a moment, and then approached the stove near which Clifford was standing.

"What was the name of the English gentleman who died in this room?" he asked, in French.

"*Monsieur Tor—Tor—ma foi, je ne pouvais jamais prononcer son nom !*" blundered the turnkey, scratching his head at the same time, in order to assist his memory.

"*Torrington ! n'est-ce pas ?*" observed Clifford.

"*Oui, Torranton,*" rejoined the man, quickly, pronouncing the word as we have written it ; "*mais comment le savez-vous, Monsieur ?*"

"What was the cause of his death?" inquired our hero, impressively, without attending to the question just asked.

"*La cause !—la cause !*" repeated the man, hesitatingly.

"*Oui, la cause ?*" repeated Delmaine, with even greater emphasis ; "*il a commis le suicide ; n'est-ce pas ?*"

"*Non, Monsieur, non,*" rejoined the *guichetier*, who had his own peculiar ideas of suicide. "*Il a seulement brûlé une si grande quantité de charbon qu'il étouffa.*"

"A very nice distinction, truly, and worthy even of a metaphysician," thought Clifford, to whom it was now evident that Torrington had had recourse to this favourite French mode of self-destruction.

"And he died in consequence, I presume !"

"*Oui, Monsieur,*" replied the *guichetier*, "*mais je n'ai pas le temps de causer—j'ai encore beaucoup à faire avant de me coucher—ainsi je vous souhaite le bon soir.*"

In the next minute the door was carefully fastened by

three ponderous bolts, and a huge padlock passed through a staple fixed in the wall, which might have defied the efforts of a Hercules to remove. This was locking up for the night with a vengeance.

"Left to himself, our hero trimmed the fire, placed the second rushlight in the bottle, and throwing himself into his chair, once more indulged in a train of bitter reflections on the past, and misgivings for the future. Despite of his situation, however, sleep weighed down his eye-lids, and he occasionally cast a wistful glance at the bed, which, miserable even as it was, tempted his wearied senses to repose.

How differently do we regard the same action when presented to our observation in different shapes—and how natural is it to man to shrink more from blood than from death itself. Perhaps the feeling of indescribable horror which Clifford had entertained at the idea of Torrington having terminated his days on that wretched couch, either by a pistol or by a razor, would have effectually deterred him from venturing near it: while the simpler but no less efficient death by suffocation, presented no such appalling image. Harassed in mind, wearied in body, the more glaring and ostensible proofs of self-destruction could alone at that moment have kept him from seeking the rest he so much required.

Throwing himself on the wretched bed, his senses were soon steeped in forgetfulness; yet was his rest not unbroken—his slumber not undisturbed. Strongly impressed with the recently past, his dreams took their colouring from the phantoms of his strongly excited imagination; and more than once he started from the momentary oblivion of his cares, as the forms of the dying Torrington, of Adeline, and De Forsac, such as he had last beheld them, flitted at intervals before his disordered vision.

It was nearly nine when he awoke from his unrefreshing slumber. His lips were parched, his blood feverish, and springing from his couch to the window, he passed his hands through the intervening bars, and

ceeded in raising the sash, to admit an air somewhat
 er than that by which he was immediately surround-

From the lofty situation of his room, he was ena-
 l to command a distinct view of the more imposing
 ures of the metropolis. The sun had risen in more
 a autumnal splendour; and its full rays beaming
 ough a cloudless atmosphere, were reflected from
 tall domes with a brilliancy that only rendered
 desolation of heart more bitter. Immediately be-
 him was the gloomy entrance to the prison, through
 ch he had been hurried on the preceding evening ;
 as his eye accidentally wandered in that direction,
 aw the uncouth *guichetier* traverse it in the direction
 ne gate, which was hidden from his view by a pro-
 ion in the wall. In the next minute the deep sound

heavy key was heard turning in the wards of the
 ; and the iron portal creaked harshly on its hinges.
 e more the man crossed the court, but not alone. He
 accompanied by a female, completely enveloped in
 ark cloak, and wearing a thick veil, which fell in
 erous folds from her hat, and entirely concealed her
 ures. Her step was uncertain, and from the general
 ecision of her manner, it was evident that she labour-
 nder some strong excitement. Clifford gazed ear-
 ly at the figure, and fancied that he recognised it.
 is, it must be her!" he involuntarily exclaimed ;
 it no," he pursued, after a pause, "it cannot be!—
 as deceived!"

The female now disappeared in the body of the pri-
 , and Delmaine turned from the window. Again his
 encountered the well-known characters of the un-
 py Torrington ; and again in his heart he cursed all
 fatal blandishments which had effected his destruc-
 1. From these reflections he naturally fell into mu-
 gs on his own condition, producing against those
 had so artfully entangled him in their webs, feel-
 s of resentment which increased with each passing
 ment ; and he had already worked his mind up to a
 y high tone, when the *guichetier*, after having unlock-

ed the door, and withdrawn the several bolts, appeared before him.

"*Il y a quelqu'un, Monsieur, qui désire vous parler.*"

"Say that I do not wish to see any person whatever," eagerly, and somewhat angrily, observed our hero, who at once comprehended that he had not been mistaken in the figure of the female.

"*Mais, Monsieur, c'est une fort belle dame, qui a l'air tout éploré,*" rejoined the practised *guichetier*, presuming that this argument ~~was~~ must be infallible.

"Say that I do not ~~wish to~~ see her," repeated Clifford, calmly and deliberately.

A low faint sob from ~~without~~ without succeeded to these words, and the *guichetier*, retiring into the corridor for a moment, observed in an under tone,—

"*Vous voyez Madame, que Monsieur ne le veut pas.*"

"*Oh ! mon Dieu ! mon Dieu !*" exclaimed a well-remembered voice, in accents which proclaimed the deepest bitterness and desolation of heart.

The piercing intonations of that voice were not unheeded by Clifford ; neither did they fail to touch him. But the veil had effectually been removed from before his eyes, and he continued firm in his determination.

Again the *guichetier* entered the room. "*Ma foi, Monsieur,*" he muttered, scratching his head as he was wont, when in doubt, "*je ne sais guères que faire—Madame est déjà à la porte, et, voyez-vous, elle m'a donné une pièce de vingt francs. Soyez raisonnable, Monsieur !*"

"*Combien de fois faut-il que je vous dise que je ne verrai personne ?*" impatiently interrupted our hero.

"Clifford ! Clifford !" exclaimed the unhappy Adeline, rushing past the turnkey, who made a feeble effort to prevent her, "*n'ai-je pas assez souffert ? Désires-tu me voir mourir à tes pieds ?*"

"*Ne me tutoyez pas, femme !*" thundered Delmaine, whose anger and excitement seemed to have increased at her presence.

The wretched Adeline sank into the seat that stood

near her, and burst into a paroxysm of tears. Clifford motioned to the *guichetier* to retire into the corridor. The man instantly obeyed, casting at the same time a look of astonishment on both.

"*Eh bien, Madame !*" sternly resumed our hero—
"*qu' désirez-vous de moi ? Etes-vous venu ici m'insulter ?*"

Adeline made no reply, but suddenly raising her head, and throwing back her veil, disclosed to his view those features on which he had so often gazed with the intensest passion. How ~~altered~~ were they, even within the last few hours ! Her ~~eyes were~~ swollen and bloodshot with weeping—her ~~lips colourless~~—her countenance haggard, and her whole appearance the personification of despair.

"All art—wretched, damnable art !" he murmured, "and assumed only to deceive. By what right," he pursued, sarcastically, in a higher key, and warming as he spoke—"by what right do you presume to intrude on my privacy ? Cannot these wretched walls even afford me protection from your presence ? or are you come to enjoy the full triumph of your artifice ? Look around, and behold the fruit of your treachery !—See to what yourself and your cowardly, contemptible paramour, have reduced me !"

"Clifford ! Clifford !" shrieked the weeping girl, throwing herself at his feet, and seizing his hand ; "of what injustice are you guilty ?—how deeply, how cruelly do you wound the heart that throbs for yourself alone !"

For an instant Delmaine was touched, staggered by the apparent sincerity of her manner ; but he soon recovered his self-possession, and with it his firmness of purpose.

"Leave me, woman !" he exclaimed vehemently, and disengaging his hand ; "leave me, and never again presume to venture into my presence. I may be deceived once, but a second time never !"

"I have not deceived you," she faltered, imploringly ;

"my only crime has been that of loving you too well. Alas! how cruelly am I punished for it."

Delmaine felt it necessary to steel himself against the pity which the desolation of her words and manner was beginning to excite; for, in spite of all his conviction of her duplicity, he acknowledged the ascendancy of her gentleness over his mind.

"Mademoiselle Dorjeville," he said, with the calm tone of one whose resolution is fully taken, and pointing to the door as he spoke, "I desire that you will leave me instantly."

The young girl passed her hand over her eyes, convulsively pressed her forehead for a moment, and then rising with an effort at self-command, with her whole countenance betrayed the deep wound inflicted on her heart, prepared to obey.

"This," she remarked, in a low and broken voice, removing a small *portefeuille* from her *sac*, and handing it to him, "is yours."

"What mean you?" asked Clifford, opening and examining the contents of the pocket-book. "Bank notes! these are not mine."

"They form but a trifling portion of what you have expended on me," pursued the unhappy Adeline, averting her face; "but they are all I possess at present—take them—they are yours."

"Never!" exclaimed Delmaine, his proud nature excited into greater haughtiness by the offer. "What I have expended on you," he pursued, somewhat contemptuously, "was for my own pleasure." And as he spoke, he thrust the pocket-book violently into her hands again.

"At least," she resumed, imploringly, "you will take the note which you left enclosed for me last night?—I know well that you must require it. Oh! Clifford, Clifford! would that the last night had never been!"

Delmaine was affected—alas! how could he be otherwise than affected, when he recollected that the suffering being who now stood before him neglected and

contemned, had only a few short hours since been clasped to his heart in all the passionate fervour of tenderness; but, as *he* also reflected on the events of the last night, his determination was more confirmed, and he replied with sarcastic slowness—

“The note which I left last night is yours—keep it—or if you do not know what to do with it, give it to your honourable colleague, De Forsac. He, I dare say, *marquis* even as *he* is, wants, and will be but too happy to receive it.”

“Cruel, cruel man!” cried Adeline, clasping her hand violently across her breast, and raising her now tearless eyes with an expression of wildness, “you have broken my heart!”

Again Delmaine was affected. The unkind sarcasm he had employed had deeply wounded the unhappy girl, and he felt dissatisfied with his conduct. Still, however, his resolution did not desert him; and in order to prevent any betrayal of returning weakness, he called sharply and peremptorily to the *guichetier*.

The man, who had been lingering in the corridor during the foregoing scene, catching merely indistinct sentences of their conversation, which, however, were sufficient to satisfy him that it was a *querelle d'amans*, now appeared in the doorway.

“*Conduisez Mailame,*” said Clifford, and he turned once more to the wretched girl. Alas! what a picture of misery did her appearance present. Her pale countenance was a concentration of grief, stupidity, and care. Her hands were clasped together, and her swollen eyes filled with an almost idiotic expression.

“*Conduisez Madame,*” he repeated, in a more hasty tone.

Adeline started—she seemed to be suddenly aroused from her trance-like state, and folding her cloak closely round her person, she dropped the thick veil over her features. “Adieu!” she exclaimed, in a voice so wild, that it caused the very blood of Delmaine to creep. “Adieu!” she repeated, and moved towards the door,

with the unequal pace of one who is labouring under intoxication. She passed into the corridor with a hurried step, and Clifford listened to the sound of her receding footsteps with breathless and painful attention. At length they died away in distance ; but, at that very moment, a loud, agonizing shriek met his ear, which, resounding throughout the whole extent of the passage, was echoed from the damp walls, in sullen melancholy, throughout his own apartment. Terrified, sick at heart, and filled with a horrible foreboding, Clifford flew into the corridor. Nothing, however, was to be seen throughout its long and gloomy extent, but the banisters of the staircase, conducting to the lower apartments of the prison. He listened again for a few minutes, expecting every moment to hear the same harrowing cry—but it was not repeated.

CHAPTER X.

PUNCTUAL to his engagement with Miss Stanley, Dormer was in the Hôtel Mirabeau, at seven, on the morning subsequent to the ball. Helen was already in the breakfast-room, awaiting his arrival with impatience, and alone. Her countenance was pale and serious, and her eyes bore evidence of the little repose she had enjoyed during the night.

"Well," he exclaimed, after their usual cordial and familiar salutation had been exchanged, "what means are we now to devise for the liberation of Delmaine?"

"There can be but one means, I fancy," returned Helen, "and that is, to pay the amount for which he has been arrested. No time, moreover, is to be lost. Sir Edward, who is really in a very alarming state, has several times expressed a desire to see him."

"Good heaven, is it possible? why, I understood from you, yesterday, that his health was greatly improved."

"So it was; but on our return last night, we found the complaint had assumed an alarming appearance. Indeed, I did not get to bed myself until near daylight, when the violence of the paroxysm had somewhat abated. My father, who has also passed but a few hours in bed, is now in his apartment."

"How unfortunate," exclaimed Dormer, who had listened to this afflicting account of the good old baronet's health with painful interest; "really," he pursued, hesitatingly, and with something of embarrassment in his manner, "I scarcely know what is to be done for Clifford. The money certainly must be paid before we can procure his liberation; and—and—but I do not know why I should have the silly pride to conceal the fact from you—I fear I have not the power of commanding the amount that, in all probability, will be necessary. I rather think he has got into the hands of usurers, for only a few days since, happening to be at Lafitte's, I heard a fellow, who had every appearance of being a money-lender, making inquiries of the chief clerk respecting his means. I fear, therefore, that the debt cannot be a very small one. We must have recourse either to the baronet or to the colonel."

"Certainly not," returned Helen, eagerly, while a faint colour tinged her unusually pallid cheek. "Delmaine has experienced mortification enough, and where it is possible to avoid it, I can see no reason why they should be made acquainted with his present condition."

"But, my dear Miss Stanley, what, in the name of Heaven, are we to do?" asked Dormer, somewhat piqued.

"Behold our resources," resumed Helen, smiling, and taking a morocco case from her reticule. "For once I shall claim the rank of paymaster-general, and bestow upon you the office of deputy-assistant. There," she pursued, in a more serious tone, "are the jewels I wore

his pocket, "I shall be off on my mission, and rely upon my assurance that whatever can, shall be done."

In Paris the gaming-houses and *bureaux du Mont de Piété*, are usually contiguous. How few Englishmen on issuing from that low den of iniquity, No. 9, in the Palais Royal, dispirited through loss, and destitute of resources, have not had their hopes suddenly revived by encountering the words, "*Commissionnaire du Mont de Piété*," traced in transparent characters on the enormous lamp which hangs suspended opposite to what was lately the *galerie de bois*! What valuable watches and snuff-boxes, the heir-looms of families, or the offerings of friendship, have travelled up the narrow flight of stairs leading to this *bureau*, never more to descend with their original possessors! How many hearts, too, have palpitated with uncertainty while the rough *commissionnaire*, satisfied that the trinket must become his, even on his own terms, has turned, and opened, and examined it fifty times, before he has thought proper to name the low and unequivalent sum he has already secretly determined on advancing!

In the days of his folly and infatuation with play, Dormer had often been compelled to have recourse to this place; and more than once had his valuable repeater, the early gift of his father, been pledged for less than one fourth of its value. Thither he now repaired, carefully, however, shunning the more public entrance of the piazza, and exploring the narrow filthy street, which conducted to the back part of the building, over which, as in the front, were traced the same large characters on the capacious lamp.

The bureau was on the floor immediately above the *entresol*. Dormer pushed the door with a trembling hand, for the recollection of the feeling of almost awe and terror, with which he used to be assailed while awaiting the decision of the despotic *commissionnaire*, produced, in spite of himself, a *serrement de cœur*, which he could not wholly overcome. The man was at the moment occupied in examining a set of trinkets, evidently

the property of a female, who, closely enveloped in a large *manteau* and veil, had turned away, as if to escape observation, on his entrance.

"These diamonds are false," at length remarked the *commissionnaire*; "I cannot lend you more than three thousand francs on them."

"Impossible!" exclaimed the female, eagerly, yet in a suppressed tone; "they are real. I am sure—I know they are real."

The man laughed insultingly. "No doubt you choose to say so; but let me tell you that I know better—I have been too long in the business to be deceived."

Then taking a few notes from a drawer. "If you like to take three thousand francs, you shall have them."

"Let me have five thousand," again imploringly urged the female—"only five thousand—I want the money for a very particular purpose. If you desire it," she pursued, observing that he was about to restore the notes to their place, "I will return you the additional two thousand in a few days."

Again the *commissionnaire* indulged in a low hoarse laugh. "I have nothing to do with your particular purposes," he growled; "and as for returning the two thousand francs, that is not our way of doing business. *Monsieur*," he added, turning to Dormer, "*désirez-vous quelque chose?*"

"When you have quite done with that lady, not before," replied Dormer, in a voice that marked his disgust at the fellow's conduct.

The female turned involuntarily round, and Dormer fancied that she started. She immediately, however, resumed her original position, and drawing her veil more closely over her features, renewed her request in a lower tone, diminishing, however, the amount of her demand to four thousand francs.

"Once for all," exclaimed the fellow, imperiously and quickly, "I will give you no more than three thousand—if you do not choose to accept that, you shall have nothing. To satisfy you, however, that the dia-

monds are false, you shall see them compared with others of precisely the same pattern, which were left here yesterday."

As he spoke, he moved to a remote corner of his bureau, unlocked another small drawer, and, unfolding a wrapper of brown paper, disclosed a case of curious workmanship, the exact counterpart of that which contained the jewels of the stranger. "You may easily distinguish the difference now," he pursued, holding one up in each hand; "these are of the first water, brilliant, polished, transparent, while yours are dull, heavy, and thick, compared with them. Depend upon it," he concluded, with his customary low, chuckling laugh, "I am too good a judge of these things to be easily deceived."

"How strange," observed the female, speaking to herself, while she partially removed the veil to examine the trinkets; "how very strange this coincidence," she pursued, glancing at the cases, which resembled each other in every particular. "This jewel case has always been considered a great curiosity. It comes from Russia."

"Very well; and do you imagine that more jewel-cases than one could not find their way from Russia? I suppose the women there," he added, turning with a satirical grin towards Dormer, "are as fond of diamonds as those of other countries."

"How very strange!" pursued the female, still thinking aloud, and without noticing the last remark; "how very unaccountable!" Then, as if struck by some sudden recollection, and raising her voice to a louder whisper, "Examine well the gold clasp of the real diamonds, and see whether there are any letters inscribed on it. If they correspond with those on the other they are mine."

The *commissionaire* did as he was desired. "There are," he said, after a momentary examination, "two letters, which correspond entirely with those on the other. This is certainly very singular. Inspect them yourself," he pursued, holding the two clasps near the

small *guichet*, or opening, through which he was in the habit of transacting his business.

"They are mine, without a doubt," observed the male, in accents of mingled astonishment and discomfiture. "I have been robbed of my jewels, and those have been substituted in their place. Describe," she sued, in more anxious and hurried tones, "the person who left them here."

"They were left by one with whom I have transacted many an affair of the kind within the last three years," replied the *commissaire*, with a significant look. "A tall, fashionable-looking man, about forty, whose extravagance, if I may judge from his repeated visits to the bureau, far exceeds his prudence. Let me see—I can give you his name on referring to my books."

He glanced for a moment at a page of what seemed to be a book of entry of the several tickets he had collected. "Monsieur Ernest de Courval is his name," he at length exclaimed, closing the ledger, and approaching the lady.

"Oh, that is the very name!" eagerly, and almost breathlessly, cried the stranger. "There is not a doubt of the jewels being mine. What am I to do to recover them?"

The *commissaire* stared at her for a moment in silence and surprise; then renewing his vulgar insulting laugh, "You have only," he said, "to go to Monsieur Ernest de Courval, who is your lover, I suppose, repay me the ten thousand francs which I lent you, and the jewels shall be yours again. Until then, they remain with me. But, to the purpose—you see Monsieur de Courval has been kept waiting a long time. Do you choose to take three thousand francs for these things?"

"Give me them—give me any thing," she murmured in a tone of the deepest wretchedness. "*Grand Dieu!*" she pursued, in a more hollow and suppressed voice, "*ayez pitié de moi!*" and resting her head on her forehead against a projecting panel of the bureau, she awaited

in apparently deep interest, the termination of the arrangements.

Dormer had been as much touched by the gentleness of manner, and the seeming distress of the stranger, as he had been disgusted with the brutality of the *commissinaire*, whose conduct, however, was only that of people in his situation. We talk of the rapacity of Jews, and hear much of their overreaching and want of feeling. What race of beings can be more rapacious, more destitute of feeling, than Christian pawnbrokers?—those bloodsuckers of the needy, by whose necessities they are enriched—those pitiless collectors of dirty copper, who hourly receive the last covering presented by vice, misery, and disease; offering in exchange for the garb, which hunger, in its triumph over decency, compels them to tender, but a fifth, a tenth, or a twentieth part of the mite which might be fairly deemed its value.

Callous to those feelings, which the sight of human wretchedness must produce on the hearts of other men, no wonder is it that insensibility should merge into rudeness and insolence. Many a respectable and delicate female, whose necessities may have driven her to this last sad resource of the destitute, has had her ears polluted with the loud laugh, and insulting observations, of these unfeeling harpies; while the close veil, in which the secret whisperings of shame have induced her to enshroud her pale and care-worn features, has scarcely been sufficient to defend her from the impertinent, bold, and scrutinizing glances of these traffickers in human misery.

"Here is your money!" roughly exclaimed the *commissinaire*, who, during Dormer's mental soliloquy, had been occupied in filling up the blanks of a printed ticket.

The female started from her reverie, grasped the notes, without speaking, and, with an uncertain step, moved towards the door. As she passed Dormer, who held it open for her, she inclined her head in acknowledgment

of the civility, and he fancied the movement was that of one not altogether unknown to him.

"Now, sir, I am at your service," said the *commissinaire*, after having secured the two sets of jewels. "You have some little *bijou* for me—a watch, I presume, eh!" And he glanced at the chain, which was appended to some ornament in Dormer's waistcoat pocket.

Dormer could have knocked the fellow down for his familiarity of address; he, however, felt the necessity for prudence, and replied carelessly,

"You are mistaken; I have no watch for you, but a valuable set of diamonds."

"What! diamonds again!" exclaimed the *commissinaire*, while his low laugh rung throughout the room, "there is no end to these—all my customers are diamond people. Are yours false, too?"

"Judge for yourself," replied Dormer, the blood rising to his face with the indignation he was compelled to check. "I want fifty thousand francs upon these," he pursued, handing him the somewhat ponderous case.

The man immediately dropped his facetious manner, and stared, with unaffected astonishment at the demand; and, in truth, Dormer had only named that amount under the impression that his price would be diminished at least one half. He had, however, no sooner opened the case, than, struck with the brilliancy and rich setting of the diamonds, he could not refrain from exclaiming in favour of their extreme beauty and value. His only doubt seemed to be in regard to the just claims to possession of the person by whom they were offered. The quick eye of a *commissinaire du Mont de Piété*, like that of a bailiff, seldom fails to recognise its victims. A scrutinizing glance now satisfied the fellow that the Englishman had often visited him on previous occasions, but as far as his recollection served him, with trinkets of far less value. "How," he thought, "has he become possessed of these?" then fixing his pepe-

trating gray eye on the countenance of Dormer, he observed,

"These diamonds are certainly very valuable—do they belong to Monsieur?"

"Of course they do," answered Dormer, returning his searching glance with a look of almost anger.

"Good," muttered the *commissionnaire*, and, much to the surprise of the applicant, without even disputing the amount of his demand, he proceeded to fill up a check on the bank for fifty thousand francs.

Possessed of this important paper, Dormer hastily quitted the *bureau*, and crossing the Palais Royal, soon found himself at the entrance of the bank. During the few minutes that were consumed in this short *trajet*, his mind was still under the influence of the surprise which the *commissionnaire's* ready compliance with his demands had excited, and he was half inclined to believe he had been duped. His heart beat as he handed the check to one of the clerks, who, in his turn, passed it to another, until it finally disappeared from his sight. Five minutes of painful uncertainty elapsed before the person who had last received the check re-appeared.

"*Les cinquante mille francs, sont ils pour Monsieur?*" he asked.

"*Oui, oui,*" exclaimed Dormer, with an eagerness that caused the man to stare at him with an expression of doubt and distrust. "They are mine," he pursued, more calmly; "I have just given you a check for that amount from the *commissionnaire* of the *Mont de Piété*."

"*Voici la somme, Monsieur,*" returned the clerk, handing him a roll of notes. "*C'est en billets de mille francs—ayez la bonté de les compter.*"

Too well pleased, however, at the idea of getting the money at all, to attend to this caution, Dormer thrust the notes hastily into his pocket, darted out of the place with a rapidity that gave rise to conjectures not the most favourable on the part of the several clerks, sprang into a *cabriolet de place*, that stood at the corner of the

bank, and desiring the fellow to drive *ventre à terre*, was, in less than twenty minutes, at the gates of Sainte Pélagie.

Alighting from the cab, he crossed towards the vestibule of the prison. Two men were supporting the inanimate form of a woman through the hall. A hasty glance at the dress was enough to satisfy Dormer that it was the female whom he had seen at the *Mont de Piété*. Some fond and neglected creature, he thought, who, after having beggared herself to supply the necessities of a thankless lover, has just been spurned from his presence with contempt. As he drew nearer, the thick enshrouding veil was blown aside by a current of air, that swept along the hall, and with surprise and pain he at once recognised the features of Adeline Dorjeville. Her countenance pale and haggard—her eyes swollen—her lips partly unclosed, and stained with blood—the appearance of the unhappy girl was such as to excite all the sympathy of the really kind and compassionating Dormer.

“Good God!—what is the matter?—what has happened to Mademoiselle Dorjeville?” he exclaimed—forgetting, in his concern for her situation, all the vices of which he believed her capable.

At the sound of her name, the unhappy girl languidly unclosed her eyes; but recognising the speaker, immediately hid them beneath their long lashes, while a slight tremour passed through her frame.

“The matter,” muttered one of the men who proved to be the *guichetier*, who had conducted her, “ask your *compatriot* up stairs what the matter is. No Frenchman would have treated his mistress in the same manner!—*C'est un monstre!*” he pursued, in the tone of one who is thinking aloud.

“*Non, non, non!*” exclaimed the young girl, with all the energy she could summon, raising her head with an effort, as she spoke, and turning her eyes once more upon Dormer—“*C'est à moi seule la faute!*”

Overcome by the exertion, her head again dropped

on her shoulder, and she seemed totally lost to all consciousness. The men now proceeded with their charge towards a *facre* that was in waiting beyond the exterior gates of the prison, and Dormer, deeply pained by the short scene he had just witnessed, entered the *greffe*.

"You have an English gentleman of the name of Delmaine, who was brought here last evening—have you not?" he inquired of the *concierge*.

"I have."

"What is the amount for which he has been arrested?"

"Thirty thousand francs," was the reply.

"Then let his creditor be sent for instantly; I have brought the amount of his debt."

"Certainly, if Monsieur wishes it," rejoined the *concierge*; "but there is no necessity whatever for such a step. If the thirty thousand francs and expenses are deposited in my hands, the gentleman can depart the next moment."

"Good," observed Dormer—"that at least will save time. I wish, however, to see Mr. Delmaine immediately."

"Here, or in his own room?" asked the gaoler.

"In his own room—is he alone?"

"He is—follow me, sir, if you please,"

Dormer was now conducted through the line of corridors which Delmaine had traversed the preceding night, and when he reached the entrance of the passage, at the further extremity of which Clifford's room was situated, the *concierge* directed him by a sign to the apartment.

"Surely that cannot be his room!—it has more the appearance of a criminal's cell!"

"Pardon me, that is Monsieur's room; shall I accompany you to the door?"

"No, I will go alone." The *concierge* bowed and left him to grope his way along the dark corridor to the wretched apartment occupied by his friend.

For several minutes after the departure of the unhap-

py Adeline, Clifford had continued to pace up and down his narrow room, vainly endeavouring to stifle the feelings of remorse and regret by which he was assailed. The wild, the harrowing cry of the young girl, sunk deep into his soul; and he would have given half his existence to have been less harsh in his manner—less unkind in his language. It was in vain he sought to reason himself into the belief that the injury he had sustained, and the provocation which had been given him, were pleas sufficient for his justification. The pride and haughtiness of his soul had been subdued in an instant, by the intenseness of suffering betrayed in that wild shriek which still rang in his ear, and vibrated on his heart, and he felt that all the offences of the wretched girl towards him were more than expiated. In the expectation of seeing her cross the court on her way from the prison, he approached the window. At that moment he observed Dormer advancing with a hurried step towards the vestibule; and following him with his eye, he saw him linger with an air of interest near some object that was concealed by the projecting wall. Springing to the sill of the window, and supporting himself by the thick iron bars, he looked eagerly down in search of what a secret foreboding whispered he would feel a fearful interest in beholding. The first glance satisfied him that he was not mistaken. On the verge of the vestibule, supported by the *guichetier* and another man, he beheld, extended, powerless, motionless, that form, which, glowing with life and energy, had so often answered to his passionate caresses. Alas! how changed was it now! At that instant her veil was blown aside, and he remarked that her cheek was pale, as if the hand of death were upon her, and that her closed mouth was stained with blood.

“God of Heaven!” he exclaimed, while a sudden sickness came over his heart, “my unkindness has murdered her!”

The window against which he leaned was partly open, and he was now enabled to distinguish the several

voices that ascended from the vestibule. He heard the exclamation of surprise, and the question asked by Dormer. The hoarse reply of the indignant *guichetier* had also reached him; and when he remarked the anxiety with which the suffering Adeline, with an exertion which only rendered her more feeble when it was passed, sought to justify his conduct, the iron of remorse entered more deeply into his soul, and unable to endure the scene any longer, he abandoned his position at the window.

"*Monstre*, indeed!" he murmured, "the man is quite right, and I have acted like a brute."

Unable to resist the impulse, he again approached the window. The men were in the act of bearing their still motionless burden across the court. In the next instant the heavy gates creaked dully on their hinges, and they passed through. After the interval of a minute or two, the wheels of a carriage were heard rolling slowly from the front of the prison. Soon afterwards the gates were reclosed, and the two men recrossed the court alone.

"It is all over," he exclaimed, turning from the window, and pacing rapidly through his chamber; "we have met for the last time! But what can have become of Dormer, and how has he contrived to find me out?"

What powerful tendency has kindness to those we love, to subdue the ruggedness of pride, and to soften the asperities of resentment! Previous to his interview with Adeline that morning, Delmaine would have shrunk from a meeting with Dormer, as from an act compromising his honour and his dignity. The high tone of his feeling would have started at the bare thought of being a subject of interest to any man, in adversity, with whom, in prosperity, he had not been on terms of intimacy. Two hours before; and his proud and unyielding spirit would have translated into insult a visit from one so long estranged from the intercourse of friendship; and the very idea of an attention originating in pity for his position, would have excited all the bitter indignation

of his soul. But the harrowing cry of the unhappy Adeline, in satisfying him that the grief she had manifested was real, had prepared his mind for an impression which lost none of its power in the evident interest Dormer had evinced for her situation, and he now anxiously awaited the appearance of his friend.

He was not long kept in suspense. The uncertain tread of ~~one~~ evidently not familiar with the localities of the prison, now reached his ear.

"Is that you, Dormer?" he eagerly inquired, rushing into the corridor, and tracing the outline of the figure in its cautious approach.

"It is!" was the warm reply. "Oh, Clifford, is it thus, and in such a place, we meet again?"

In the next instant they were in each other's embrace. Every unkind feeling had vanished, and each felt that, in being restored to the intimacy of the other, a heavy weight had been removed from his heart. Not the slightest allusion was made by either to the past.

"Good God! what an abode!" exclaimed Dormer, after the first burst of feeling was passed, glancing at the filthy walls, and miserable furniture of the room.

"Wretched enough, indeed; but I am not the only friend of yours to whom it has afforded shelter. You recollect our old schoolfellow, Torrington?"

"Henry Torrington—certainly; what of him? I met him on my first arrival in Paris; but since then I have utterly lost sight of him."

"Do you wish to learn his fate?" asked Clifford, mournfully approaching the bed as he spoke, and pointing to the lines in pencil traced by the unfortunate young man.

Dormer advanced to the spot, and read with dismay the short sentences which so clearly proved the death of his schoolfellow to have been accomplished by his own hand.

"Too true," he exclaimed quickly, and with bitterness; "this is another of the many victims to the infatuation of those d—d salons—" he checked himself, for

he felt that he was indirectly condemning Clifford. "But have you any confirmation of the fact?" he inquired; "perhaps he may have died a natural death, after all."

"The *guichetier* who conducted me here, admits that he died by suffocation from charcoal," returned Delmaine, expressively. "But that young girl, Dormer," he added, hesitatingly, after a pause—"that young girl, whom you met just now in the vestibule—what of her?—what was the matter with her?" and his heart throbbed violently as he awaited the answer.

"Still the same interest in her," thought Dormer, while an expression of disappointment stole insensibly over his features. "The *guichetier* seemed to say," he at length observed, evasively, "that you had treated her with great severity."

"With severity! say rather with barbarity," eagerly interrupted Clifford; "I behaved in the most inhuman manner to her. Nay, Dormer, that look satisfies me that you misjudge my feelings. When you learn that I am sensible of having been deceived, duped, and betrayed, and that all connexion between Adeline Dorjeville and myself is consequently at an end, you will at once perceive that I have recovered from my delusion."

"Thank God!" exclaimed Dormer, fervently, and unable to restrain the deep expression of his joy.

"Still," pursued Clifford, "I ought not to have forgotten that she once was dear to me. Oh, Dormer, had you seen her seated, the image of despair, on that—Ha! she has left her money after all. The contents of this," he pursued, taking the pocket-book from the chair on which the young girl had, unseen by him, dropped it at her departure, "the contents of this she came to offer me, but how, or where obtained, I know not. Yesterday she had not a Napoleon in the world, and here are four thousand francs, one thousand of which I left enclosed at the moment when I quitted her for ever. Really, if I had not witnessed what I have, I

should almost feel inclined to believe she was sincere. This last sentence was spoken more to himself than to Dormer, and a few minutes of silence ensued.

"And can the woman who pleaded so eloquently, so earnestly, for a greater sum, to be appropriated solely to the same purpose, be guilty of treachery to him for whom, in the hour of adversity, it was solicited? Can she, on whom the language of unkindness has produced an effect threatening life itself with extinction, and paralyzing every feeling with despair—can such a woman have duped, deceived, and betrayed, the man who could call forth such powerful proofs of devotedness? Impossible! I have judged the young girl unjustly. She is not—she cannot be the worthless being I have hitherto imagined."

Thus mused Dormer. Whatever, however, were his own impressions on the subject, he carefully avoided communicating them to his friend, purposely omitting any account of his meeting with the young Frenchwoman at the *Mont de Piété*. Nay, he rather rejoiced in the error into which it was evident to himself that Clifford had fallen, since it would more effectually strike at the foundation of all intimacy or connexion between the parties.

"Dormer, I must beg of you to call and deliver this pocket-book into her own hands. You may say, also, that though we can never meet again, I freely forgive her. Soften down my harshness as you can, and attribute it, in some degree, to the annoyance consequent on my present situation. Let me entreat you," he continued, "to lose no time in seeing her; for the agonizing shriek she uttered in the corridor still rings in my ear, and—did you not remark that there was blood upon her face?"

"I did—I fancy she must have fallen; and, if so, that, in all probability, was the cause of the shriek you heard."

Clifford shuddered, as the recollection of that wild cry again crossed his mind. "I know not," he said,

"what has occasioned it, but I confess I am most anxious to learn how she has got over this horrid scene. You will see her, will you not?"

"Certainly, Clifford, since you wish it; but I must first acquit myself of the commission that has brought me here."

Clifford's inquiring look demanded the nature of that commission.

"Your instant release, Delmaine," pursued his friend.

"My release, Dormer! Do you know the amount for which I have been arrested?"

"I know every thing, Delmaine. Your debt is thirty thousand francs: the expenses about five hundred more."

"Well, but, Dormer, if I could even profit by your generous offer, I still know your own means to be so limited—"

"Did I not always give you to understand that Mr. Worthington had a large fortune?" pursued his friend, smiling significantly.

"What do you mean?" eagerly inquired Clifford; "surely you do not intend to say that you have seen and been reconciled to him?"

"Seen him I have not," resumed Dormer, seriously, "for he is dead—reconciled with him I am, as far as a desire expressed by him during his last moments to see me purified from the gross indulgence of play, and the husband of his daughter, can be deemed proof of reconciliation."

"But how know you all this? have you had letters from America?"

"No letters, Clifford," continued his friend, again smiling. "I know it from the lips of *her* who alone could add tenfold value to the communication."

"What, Miss Worthington herself! I congratulate you from my soul, Dormer. When did she arrive? What has brought her to this country?"

"She arrived three days since. I, however, only saw her yesterday, and that by accident. I happened to be standing talking to a gentleman near a *magazin de*

modes, in the Rue Vivienne, when the carriage of the American envoy drove up to the door. You may judge my surprise when, in the persons of two ladies who alighted from it, I instantly recognised Agatha and her aunt. At some future period I will relate the explanation that ensued. Suffice it to say, that in another week I am to be united to her whom I have so long and so faithfully loved. At present my only anxiety is to see you out of this wretched place. I have brought the amount of your debt with me, and the sooner we are off the better. Of course you accept my offer. Sir Edward, by the way, who is quite ignorant of the circumstances in which you are placed, is seriously ill, and wishes much to see you."

"Say no more," cried Clifford, grasping his hand. "I am ready to comply with your wishes. Is Colonel Stanley," he eagerly asked, "likewise ignorant of my position?"

Dormer satisfied him that he was; and dreading least he should make the same inquiry in regard to Helen, he hastily pursued, "I understand that it is not necessary to wait for the arrival of your creditor: the mere act of depositing the money with the *concierge* will be sufficient. Suppose you descend with me?"

"What, in this state?" asked Delmaine, pointing to his uncombed hair, and disordered dress. "How can I possibly enter my hotel in this garb?"

"They will think you have passed the night in raking, and that, you know, is too common a thing in Paris to attract much observation. You can complete your toilet while I execute the message with which you have intrusted me."

To this arrangement Delmaine acceded, and the friends once more threaded the mazes of the gloomy corridor. As they descended to the lower rooms of the prison, the hum of voices became more frequent and consolidated, and the same savoury perfumes that Clifford had remarked on the preceding day, announced the preparation of numerous *piquant déjeunés à la four-*

chette for the delicate palates of those who seemed only to live there for the purpose of eating.

While they yet lingered on the last flight of stairs, waiting for a *guichetier* to open the strong barrier which impeded their passage to the *greffe*, Dormer drew the attention of his friend to an elderly personage of respectable appearance, who was passing the corridor with an air of deep musing and abstraction.

"Do you know that individual?" he asked.

Clifford replied in the negative, and Dormer pursued, "That is a Major S——, an American gentleman, who has been confined here for the last thirteen years. He is imprisoned for an enormous sum, which, report says, he has more the ability than the inclination to pay; but as he conceives himself to have been overreached in the transaction which entailed his arrest, he has continued firm in his determination not to pay it, although well aware that, as a foreigner, he must end his days in confinement, unless he does."

"I should imagine, that thirteen years of imprisonment would so disgust any man with the place, as to make him rejoice at the prospect of quitting it on any terms."

"Quite the contrary in this instance," continued Dormer; "habit has become with him a sort of second nature; and as he is not without fortune, he possesses the means of doing much good. From all I can learn, he is extremely kind and benevolent, frequently paying the smaller debts of his fellow prisoners, who have no resources of their own, and performing a variety of charitable acts. Almost every Englishman who has been here for any length of time, speaks well of him."

The *guichetier* now appeared at the gate, which, at the desire of the friends, was unclosed to admit of their passage to the *greffe*. Apprized of the approaching departure of his prisoner, and expecting to be remunerated for his trouble, the dull frown which Clifford had hitherto remarked on his countenance, was succeeded by an attempt at a smile, and his movements were rather

less dilatory. Clifford took a Napoleon from Dormer and placed it in his hand as he passed.

"*Quel brave homme que ce Monsieur Anglais!*" muttered the fellow, as he pocketed the gold, "*j'espère bientôt le revoir.*"

Arrived at the *greffe*, the thirty thousand francs, what the *concierge* computed to be the expenses, was paid, and a receipt taken for the amount, when, furnished with the several papers connected with the arrest, which were now given up, the prisoner was finally suffered to depart.

CHAPTER XI.

FROM the Rue de Richelieu, where our hero now alighted, Dormer proceeded to the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin: Here he was told, by the porter, that Mademoiselle Dorjeville had gone out early in the morning, and was not yet returned.

"Can I see her servant?" he inquired.

"*A propos*," returned the man. "*Fanchon*, her *femme de chambre*, has just been sent for by Madame, the mother of Mademoiselle—perhaps Monsieur will find her there."

"What is the address of Madame Dorjeville?"

"*Numero* —, in the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs."

Once more Dormer sprang into the cabriolet, and, desiring the *cocher* to drive with all possible speed, soon found himself at the address which had been given him. It was a dirty, sombre-looking building, the entrance to which was approached by an equally dirty and sombre-looking passage. At the end of this stood the porter's lodge.

"*Je crois que c'est ici que demeure Madame Dorje-*

ville," he observed to the *portière*, a young and pretty woman, whose eyes were red with recent weeping.

"*Oui, Monsieur, No. 12, au troisième,*" was the melancholy reply.

"*Mademoiselle Dorjeville y-est-elle ?*"

A burst of tears succeeded to this question ; and it was some moments before the afflicted creature could reply.

"*Oh, Monsieur, elle vient de rentrer, il n'y a qu'une heure, toute couverte de sang, et dans un état déplorable. La bonne de Madame est allé chercher un médecin ; mais je crains qu'elle soit mourante, cette aimable demoiselle !*"

Dormer shuddered. For a moment, as it occurred to him that his visit might be ill-timed, he thought of abandoning his purpose ; but, when he recollected the extreme anxiety of his friend to ascertain the extent of Adeline's injury, a motive which was strongly seconded by his own growing interest in the unhappy girl, he resolved, if possible, to see Madame Dorjeville, if not herself.

"I wish particularly to see either Madame or Mademoiselle," he observed.

"*Monsieur peut monter, s'il veut ; mais je doute beaucoup qu'on le reçoive,*" pursued the *portière*, sobbing, and wiping away her tears with her *tablier*.

Satisfied with this permission, Dormer turned from the *loge* to the entrance of the building from which it was detached. The same air of filth and gloom which characterized its external appearance, was visible within, and after ascending three narrow flights of creaking stairs, through which the cold winds of the season rushed with cutting bitterness, he at length reached the apartment to which he had been directed. The walls, the door, and the solitary window, by means of which the landing-place derived its imperfect light, were covered with dust and cobwebs, and bore, in every sense, such decided marks of wretchedness, that Dormer, for a moment, fancied he had mistaken, not only

the *étage*, but the house itself. The *portière* had, however, said, that Madame Dorjeville lived there, and the number she had given him was that which he now beheld. With an indefinable sense of dread of what was to ensue, he slightly touched the bell.

In the next instant, the door was opened, and a female sobbing violently, and with her eyes completely dimmed with tears, appeared before him.

"*Est-ce vous, Monsieur le docteur? entrez, au nom de Dieu!—il y a long-temps qu'on v us attend.*"

"I wish if possible to see Mademoiselle Dorjeville—or, if she is too unwell to receive me, her mother," said Dormer, in a tremulous tone, and half regretting that he had ventured so far.

The *femme de chambre* started on hearing the voice of a stranger, instead of that of the medical man who was expected, and her tears flowed even faster than before, as she replied, "that her mistress was too ill, and Madame too greatly afflicted in mind, to receive any visiter."

"Say that I am the bearer of a message from Mr. Delmaine," again urged Dormer, "and that I have something particular to communicate."

"Monsieur Delmaine!" repeated the girl, quickly, "what of him? Oh, I am sure, although my mistress persists in denying it to Madame, that he is the sole cause of her indisposition. Never," she pursued in an under tone to herself, "shall I forget how he looked last night when I told him of the accident that had happened to the marquis; and then my poor mistress, who loved him so well, and to whom he sent me, in what a condition did I find her! Stop," she concluded, mistaking a slight movement made by Dormer for an intention to depart, "perhaps Madame Dorjeville will see you—have the goodness, therefore, to come in, and wait a moment." Then leading the way to the salon, she passed on to an apartment at the further extremity.

It was impossible for Dormer, even with all the anxiety incident to his position, not to be struck by the ex-

same air of confusion pervading the apartment into which he had been thus hastily and unceremoniously ushered. On the breakfast table, and mingled with the several fragments, were profusely scattered pots of solid, and phials of liquid *rogue*, *pomades*, *graisse d'ours*, *crèmes*, *pâtes d'amandes*, and all the thousand auxiliaries necessary to the *toilette* of a Parisienne in the decline of her beauty. A small *miroir* rested in a slanting position against a coffee cup, while a piece of burnt cork for shading the eyebrows, and a lighted bougie, announced that the operation of the *toilette* had been disturbed in some sudden and disagreeable manner. A pack of dirty cards, with which the *bonne aventure* of the owner had no doubt been told a hundred times over, were lying scattered on the same table, and with these, a fair-haired, bare-legged little girl, apparently about five years of age, and covered simply with a *chemise de nuit*, was amusing herself with all the eagerness of her years. At a little distance from the table, and on one side of the dull fire, before which the contents of a coffee-pot were stewing and simmering, stood a *bain de pied*, and on the other a *canapé*, at one extremity of which, a large, white, unwashed poodle dog lay snoring and stretched at his full length, intruding at intervals on a variety of rich costume, that lay at the opposite end, and had evidently been thrown off the preceding evening. A pair of fine *bas de coton brodé*—that *chausure* considered a *distinguée* by all Frenchwomen, and a pair of satin shoes, one of which was burst on the instep, lay immediately in front of the fire. These were the principal objects in the foreground: nor was the perspective at all out of keeping. But we dare not venture into a closer detail of these mysteries.

Dormer, whose quick eye had caught all these peculiarities in less time than we have taken to describe them, was far from being ignorant what very different beings most Frenchwomen appear when *en déshabille*, in the privacy of their own homes, to what they are when brilliant with dress, and animated with the hope

of pleasing, they seek to shine as constellations in that society, to which custom and love of dissipation have rendered them slaves. He was not, however, prepared to encounter such decided proofs of the fact, as those now exhibited, and he turned in disgust to the only window in the room. It commanded a near and distinct view of the back apartments of the Rue de Richelieu, and more immediately that of the Hôtel d'Espagne. On a *balcon* attached to the first floor, and overhanging the court-yard of the latter, a female somewhat inclining to *embonpoint*, and loosely clad in a coarse dark cotton wrapper—her feet *en pantoufles*, and her head ornamented with a *mouchoir de soie en turban*, which imperfectly concealed her hair *en bandeau*, now suddenly made her appearance. A small monkey, a number of birds of various descriptions, and a few flowers peculiar to the season, were the objects of this visit. They had obviously been placed on the *balcon* for air, and the female we have just described came to remove them. She was received by the monkey with a chattering, expressive of its satisfaction, which instantly attracted the attention of the little girl at the table, who, abandoning her cards, ran to the side of Dormer, and mounting on a chair that stood next the window, exclaimed, with true infantine delight—

“*Oh, le joli singe ! aimez-vous les singes, Monsieur ?*” Dormer smiled at the earnestness with which her countenance as well as her words expressed her gratification, and she pursued, “*Je voudrais bien que Madame P—a m’en le donna.*”

“*Madame P—a ! ma petite, est-ce bien Madame P—a que cette dame là ?*”

“*Oui Monsieur,*” returned the child, with vivacity, though in a subdued voice. “*Maman m’a dit que c’est une très-grande cancatrice—et souvent pendant l’été elle passe des heures entières sur ce balcon, au clair de la lune. Étant les plus jolis airs du monde. Et tous les jours, Monsieur, quand elle est ici, elle s’occupe de ses oiseaux, et de ses fleurs, et de joli singe. Ah ! que je l’aime ce*

singe-là," and she rubbed her little hands together with delight at the very idea of being possessed of so great a treasure.

During these details, which were delivered with all the volubility and action peculiar to a French child, Dormer sought to catch a glimpse of the features of the stranger. It was some moments before she afforded him an opportunity ; but when she did, he at once recognised in the expansive brow, the sallow complexion, the full dark eye, and the Grecian expression of countenance, the wonderful being, whose powers of song had so often captivated the souls, and commanded the homage of millions.

Little do they, he mused, who have seen her at the Italian opera, resplendent in costume, brilliant in talent, and moving with all the majesty of a queen, imagine her *rétue en vilaine robe de chambre, en mouchoir de tête, et en pantoufles*. Little do they, whose souls have thrilled at the powerful energies of her Medea and her Tancredi, imagine her holding senseless converse with a loathsome and disgusting monkey. Yet these things are ; and there is, it is to be presumed, as much difference between Madame P—a *en scene*, and Madame P—a *en particulière*, as there is between Madame Dorjeville *en société*, and Madame Dorjeville *en déshabille*.

The opening of the door through which the *femme de chambre* had disappeared, once more recalled him to the painful consciousness of what was passing around him. He turned, and beheld the person in regard to whose appearance his last comparison had been instituted. How unlike, indeed, to the Madame Dorjeville whom he had once been in the habit of meeting during the days of his own folly and inexperience. An old black silk gown hung loosely over her shoulders, and a pair of dirty cotton stockings as loosely over her heels, one of which protruded from a furred slipper—the other from a red satin shoe. Her hair drawn tightly across her forehead, by numerous and vari-coloured *papil-*

lottes, betrayed a host of wrinkles, which the more careless arrangement of voluminous curls usually hid from observation. Cold cream, rouge, and tears, were singularly blended together, and trickled from her cheeks to her handkerchief, where they formed a pink paste; while one eyebrow, less shaded than the other, proved that tears had been interrupted at the precise moment when the burnt cork, which we have described, was in operation. At any other moment, Dormer would have turned away from her with disgust and ridicule; but at present he only saw the desolation of the mother, and he pitied her from his soul.

"Maman," exclaimed the little girl, obeying on those sudden bursts of feeling which the sight of tears in another, especially if that other be a mother, is apt to produce in children; "*ne pleurez pas tant. ma sœur Adeline sera bientôt aussi bien portante que moi*," and she buried her face in her lap.

"Jamais, jamais," cried the wretched mother, clinging the child to her heart, and bursting into a fresh paroxysm of tears; "*ta sœur est mourante. Oh, Dieu! ayez pitié de ma fille!*"

Dormer was deeply affected. Scarcely conscious of what he did, he now made a movement to retire, when Madame Dorjeville arrested him.

"Vous êtes l'ami de Monsieur Delmaine?" she said in a low and broken voice. Dormer bowed affirmatively.

"Ma fille est prête à vous recevoir, Monsieur," murmuring towards the door which communicated to her boudoir, she flung herself, still sobbing hysterically, on the *canapé*, crushing, in the action, all the gorgeous trappings of her last night's revelry.

What had Dormer been placed in so trying a situation. With a cautious tread he approached the room, a slow thick breathing, mingled with a convulsive sobbing, came from within. The door stood slightly ajar. He pushed it open, and as his eye lingered on the scene before him, a film came over his sight, and his heart throbbed violently.

A plate of ice, and several basins containing blood, were lying on a table near the window, while numerous *serviettes*, saturated with the same fluid, were strewed confusedly about the floor. In a *fauteuil*, on the opposite side, lay the well-remembered hat and cloak, and at the further extremity of the chamber, within an alcove, stood a bed, the curtains of which were partially unclosed, disclosing the countenance of one on whose lips and face traces of blood were still discernible. At the foot of the bed, a female, whom Dormer instantly recognised as the servant by whom he had been admitted, knelt, with her face buried in her hands, and sobbing violently. That the unhappy Adeline had ruptured a blood-vessel, and was considered to be in a dying state, these alarming indications sufficiently testified, and Dormer gazed on her pale cheek, until his own blood chilled and crept within his veins. While he yet hesitated, uncertain how to act, the sufferer raised herself slowly on her pillow, and beckoned to him to approach. He did so; she extended her hand to him—it was cold as marble, and her glazed and fixed eye was turned on his, almost without power of expression, as she slowly murmured through her half-closed lips:—

“You are the friend of Clifford, I know, and you have been sent here by him, Oh, tell me, does he still hate me?”

Mistaking the hesitation produced on Dormer by his deep emotion for an unwillingness to communicate something unpleasant, she now became more anxious. Her eyes emitted a momentary lustre, and, with a wild and unnatural energy, that startled and drew the kneeling servant to her feet, she again demanded,—

“Oh, tell me, if you have pity, does he still hate me? But no, no, he cannot—I have never injured him.”

“So far from hating you,” rejoined Dormer, eagerly, “he has sent me to make his peace with you. Nay,” he pursued, perceiving the sudden effect produced by this assurance, and desirous of affording her even further consolation, “Delmaine still loves you as much as ever.”

"*Dieu merci !*" she almost shrieked in reply. Suddenly the false tone of excitement, which she had momentarily assumed, deserted her, and she sank once more into utter helplessness and exhaustion. "*Maintenant je meure contente,*" she murmured almost inaudibly—" *Fanchon, où est maman ?*"

"*Me voici, ma fille,*" answered the afflicted Madame Dorjeville herself, who, attracted by the wild exclamation of the sufferer, had entered the room hastily, and unperceived by her—" *que veux tu ?*"

No answer came from the closed lips—no sign of recognition from the pale and fixed features of the motionless girl. "*Voici votre maman, Mademoiselle,*" eagerly exclaimed the weeping Fanchon, her whole countenance expressing fear, grief, and consternation—still Adeline answered not.

"*Adeline, ma fille, parle-moi !*" cried the distracted mother, imprinting her lips on the pale cheek of the girl. An exclamation of wild and fearful agony succeeded to this action. "*Oh, ciel, elle est morte !*" she shrieked, and throwing her arms around the unconscious form, she sank fainting at her side—Adeline was dead.

Let us pass over the details of this afflicting scene. Conscious that his presence could be of no use, and in a state of the utmost stupor, and agony of mind, Dormer rushed from the apartment. When he reached the Rue de Richelieu, his features were yet agitated from the excitement produced by the preceding scene. Delmaine, who had been anxiously awaiting his arrival, rose eagerly to receive him.

"Have you seen her then?" he demanded, while the pale hues of fear and anxiety flew with the rapidity of lightning to his cheek.

Dormer made no answer, but moving with a hurried step across the room, threw himself on a *canapé*, and buried his face in his hands.

Intensely excited by the manner of his friend, Delmaine vehemently repeated the question.

"*I have* seen her, Clifford," at length, murmured the almost unconscious Dormer.

Delmaine shuddered at the solemn and impressive manner in which this vague and unsatisfactory sentence was uttered. "Then she is better, is she not?" he faintly pursued, in a tone that betrayed the fearful surmises which he himself entertained.

"She is dead!"

"Dead!" echoed Delmaine, with a convulsive start, while his features assumed a yet paler hue, as he threw himself at the side of his friend—"Almighty God, is it possible!"

That night Clifford Delmaine was pronounced to be in a high state of fever; on the second it increased to delirium, and, on the third, life was despaired of.

CONCLUSION.

READER, to detail the several incidents that succeeded to the melancholy event narrated in our last chapter, would require another volume. Few, however, can be ignorant of the decidedly hostile manner in which the critics have recently opposed themselves to any infringement on the established customs of the day. As we have all due respect for them, we bow to their fiat, and proceed to sum up the remainder of our story in a few sentences.

Six weeks after the liberation of our hero from Ste. Pélagie, Agatha Worthington and Frederick Dormer were united at the hotel of the British ambassador in Paris, whence they soon afterwards set off for Florence, their friends returning to England nearly about the same time. Sir Edward Delmaine, whose health had been gradually sinking beneath a complication of disease, died within three weeks after his arrival in Grosvenor street. During his last moments, his whole anxiety had been the accomplishment of the union on which he had

latterly so much set his heart, nor did he rest satisfied until he had obtained the consent of his still somewhat reluctant friend.

In the autumn of that year, and twelve months after their first introduction, Sir Clifford Delmaine received the hand of the noble-minded Helen from her father. Like Dormer, he has profited by his experience, and completely "sown his wild oats." He is at this moment the most fondly attached and attentive of husbands, and the whole tenor of his conduct is such as to afford every probable guaranty for the future and undiminishing happiness of his accomplished wife. They are now in town, but intend joining their friends in Italy as soon as Sir Clifford, who has a seat in Parliament, has given his vote on the Duke of Wellington's Catholic Bill.

An uninterrupted correspondence has been kept up between Dormer and our hero since their separation. In one of the early letters of the former, the death of the Marquis de Forsac was announced. It appeared by his own showing, that immediately after the liberation of Delmaine from prison, he suddenly took the alarm, and set off at once for Italy, where he, for a time, pursued his wonted licentious career. Having, however, been detected in an intrigue with the wife of a British officer, he was compelled, much against his inclination, to meet the offended husband, and at the first fire he fell, mortally wounded. Nothing could exceed the horror and dismay with which he listened to the declaration of the surgeon, that there was no hope of his recovery. The dread of death, however, brought with it repentance, and his first object was to send for Dormer, whom he knew to be residing in Florence. To him he fully revealed the secret of his machinations against Delmaine, declaring himself to be the author of the anonymous communication, and at the same time acquitting the unhappy Adeline of any thing like premeditated participation in his schemes, and duplicity of conduct. As a last act of justice to the family of that unfortunate girl, he executed a deed of settlement of three thousand francs per annum, almost the sole remaining wreck of his once splendid

property, on Madame Dorjeville, with a proviso that she should leave Paris altogether, and repair to her native province. This document, together with the duplicate of her daughter's jewels, of which, as the reader must long since have divined, he had been the purloiner, he requested Dormer to forward to Paris. His desire was complied with, and within three weeks after the announcement of De Forsac's death, Madame Dorjeville and her child were far removed from the *bruyante* gayety and dissipation of the metropolis.

The elucidation of the mystery connected with the singular change in his beloved Agatha's letters at an earlier period of our story, Dormer has reserved until the arrival of his friend. We regret, for the reader's sake, that we are quite in the dark on that subject ourselves.

A word in relation to the other more prominent characters in our story.

We have had no opportunity of ascertaining whether our tall friend, Mr. Dart, has perpetrated the crime of matrimony with either Miss Lucy or Miss Fanny Rivers; but we can safely assure those who entertain the slightest interest in the dancing gentleman, that he is still in Paris, as stiff in the arms, and as active in the heels as ever—neither are the folds of his cravat diminished one iota either in length or in amplitude. Long may he live to dance and to eat hot suppers.

Monsieur de Warner, his Herculean antagonist, promises fair, we understand, to rival him in the former of these accomplishments. Report whispers that he, not long since, took it into his head to perform a *pas seul* on the body of a captain in the British service, until he absolutely danced the soul out of its frail tenement. The same report adds, that the French civil authorities, instead of awarding him a medal for the introduction of this new step, have assigned him a cell in the *conciergerie*, whence he will only be removed to exhibit *devant la cour*.

The Comte de Hillier is still living, as ferociously

quarrelsome, and as brutal as ever. His friend and second, Lord Hervey, has lately come to an earldom.

The Commandant P——, we are happy to state, for the information of those who, despite of our warning voice, may yet feel a curiosity to visit the *salons of Paris*, is no longer a resident in that metropolis. Tired of the repeated complaints which were made from every quarter against this dangerous personage, the *Bureau de Guerre* were resolved to get rid of him. This they easily accomplished, by appointing him to a situation in his native place, where he probably now exercises his dexterity on the *jeunes gens de Marseilles*.

Last on the tapis, we beg leave to introduce an old acquaintance of the reader, and a particular friend of our own, Captain Terence O'Sullivan, of his Majesty's —— regiment. He is now in town, and still the same good-natured, kind-hearted fellow, we have long known him to be—just as averse to going out with a foreigner, and as ready as ever to lend his advice, his services, and his pistols, to a friend. The Mantons which served Sir Clifford Delmaine so well, are still in his possession. Calling on him a few days since, we found him at his favourite occupation—that of putting them in order. On one compartment of the case is engraved, on a silver plate, the name “Terry;” on the other, in somewhat larger characters, appears the word “Count.” We could not avoid expressing our admiration at the high order in which these celebrated weapons are kept, when the captain, with a peculiar smile, and nod of the head, observed, in a low tone—

“Should ye happen to want them, ye know they will be quite at your service at any time—ye may command both myself and them whenever ye like.”

We thanked him kindly—said, we hoped most sincerely, that neither we, nor any of ours, should ever stand in need of any thing half so formidable, shook hands with him, and left him to pursue his occupation.

Reader—*Vale.*

THE END.

